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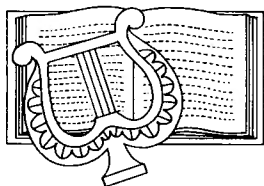
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PREFACE.

“THE History of Miss Clarissa Harlowe,” by Samuel Richardson, Esq., was published one hundred and twenty years ago. Richardson was fifty years old before he attempted authorship. His “Pamela,” albeit suited to the taste of the day, fell deservedly into the shade on the appearance, eight years afterwards, of “Clarissa,” “A work,” says Sir Walter Scott, “on which his fame as a classic author will rest for ever.”

A report having been spread that the catastrophe was to be unfortunate, the ladies implored the reformation of Lovelace, and his happy union with Clarissa; “but,” continues Scott, “the sublimity of the moral would have been destroyed by such a conclusion.” And the great critic goes so far as to say, “the work raised the fame of its author to its height, and no work had appeared before, perhaps none has appeared *since*, containing such direct appeals to the passions in a manner so irresistible.”

Richardson’s reputation was so exalted in France and Germany that foreigners visiting England were wont to seek the Flask Walk at Hampstead, so distinguished in a scene in “Clarissa Harlowe,” and Diderot vied with Rousseau and others in heaping incense on the shrine of the author—the former comparing him to Homer.

Mrs. Barbauld is as earnest as these enthusiasts in praise of “this new kind of moral painting,” and Dr. Johnson pro-

nounced that Richardson "had by his novel of 'Clarissa' enlarged the knowledge of human nature." "Abroad and at home," says another critic, "'Clarissa' was received as a grand and impressive drama, teaching deep lessons of virtue, through the tragic medium of pity and terror, the catastrophe being worthy to be compared to the noblest efforts of the elder dramatists or the Greek tragedians."

I have quoted these remarkable utterances of good and learned men as the best guarantee for the moral beauty of a work which society, from its ignorance of its contents or purpose, is too apt to pronounce as "coarse," nay, "vicious," and even "dull." The redundancy of Richardson's style had a charm for the readers of his day, when time hung heavy on the hands of fine ladies shut up in country houses, or dawdling over fancy work and pug-dogs, with small interest in passing events, and dead to the delights of that earnest work for good which all may find who seek it. But even so, the romance, in its original shape, is too much trammelled with irrelevant matter to be thoroughly understood or enjoyed. It has therefore been my chief aim to remove these trammels by expunging some scenes and passages that can well be spared, but leaving as intact as my limits will permit the history of the last three months of Clarissa's life, when "God," as she says, "would not permit her to rely on any one for comfort but Himself," and when, purified by suffering, and all her worldly troubles over, she passes her whole time in preparing herself for her Father's House and Everlasting Rest.

HARRIET WARD.

LONDON, *October 23rd*, 1868.

CLARISSA HARLOWE.



(Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.)

I AM much concerned, my dearest friend, at the disturbances that have happened in your family, and long to have the particulars from yourself of the usage you have received on an accident you could not help, in which the sufferer was the aggressor.

The surgeon whom I sent for after the rencontre to inquire how your brother was, told me there was no danger from the wound. . . . They say that Mr. Lovelace could not avoid drawing his sword, and that your brother's passion or unskilfulness left him from the first pass at his mercy.

Everybody pities you. . . . My mother and all of us talk of no one else. Write me, my dear, the whole of your story from the time Mr. Lovelace was introduced to your family.

Some have it that the younger sister has stolen the lover from the elder. If anything unhappy should fall out, your account of all things previous will be your justification.

Pardon me—yet why should I say pardon when your concerns and honour are mine?—when I love you as never woman loved another?

Your affectionate

A. HOWE.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Harlowe Place, *January 13th.*

I CANNOT doubt your sincerity, my dear friend, for in all you do and say you give lessons to one who loves you. Our family has been in tumults since the unhappy transaction, and I have borne all the blame. I have sometimes wished it had pleased God to take me in my last fever, when I had everybody's love and good opinion; but oftener that I had

never been distinguished by my grandfather, since that distinction has estranged me from my brother's and sister's affections, and raised a jealousy with regard to the favour of my uncles.

My brother having recovered of his wound, I will be as particular as you desire in the history you demand.

It was in pursuance of a conference between Lord M—— and my uncle Antony that Mr. Lovelace paid his respects to my sister Arabella. I was then absent at my dairy-house, busied in the accounts relating to the estate my grandfather had devised to me.* My brother was then in Scotland. My sister visited me the day after Mr. Lovelace had been introduced, and seemed highly pleased with the gentleman. "So handsome a man! too handsome for her. Were she but as amiable as somebody, there would be a probability of holding his affections. But then," stepping to the glass, she complimented herself that she was "very well. Her eyes were not amiss—nothing to be found fault with, was there, Clary?" Such were her remarks.

She received my congratulations with a great deal of complacency.

She liked him still better at his second visit; and yet he made no particular address to her, though an opportunity was given him; but she found a reason for his not improving this opportunity. It was bashfulness—bashfulness in Mr. Lovelace, my dear. . . . He would have spoken out at his third visit, she believed; but once or twice, as he was about to do so, he was under so agreeable a confusion! She loved dearly that a gentleman should show a profound respect for his mistress!

But after this visit she began to be dissatisfied with him. What did the man mean? This distant behaviour was the

* As the persecution of Clarissa by some of her relatives originated in the jealousy caused by her grandfather's will in her favour, it may interest the reader to have an outline of its contents:—

This estate, originally called the Grove, had been left to Clarissa by her grandfather, because, not only were the rest of her family rich in possession and reversion, but because, as he states in the preamble to his will, "Clarissa had been from her infancy a matchless young creature, and very extraordinary child." "The delight of my old age," he says, "who I verily believe has contributed by her duty and regard to prolong my life." He had indulged her in fitting up a dairy-house on the property to her own taste, inviting her there in his lifetime as often as her friends could spare her. This will in Clarissa's favour is evidently the groundwork of the family quarrel with her.

more extraordinary as he continued his visits, and declared himself anxious to cultivate the acquaintance of the whole family. But she would be quite solemn and shy on his next visit if there were not a peculiarity in his address to her.

How they managed it in this visit I cannot tell; but she says it was not till, by some means or other (she knew not how), he had wrought her up to such a pitch of displeasure that she could not recover herself on the instant, and as he demanded a definitive answer without endeavouring to mollify her, she was under the necessity of persisting in her denial.

* * * *

And thus, as Mr. Lovelace thought fit to take it, had he his answer from my sister. He sighed, as Bella told us, when he took leave of her, grasped her hand and kissed it with such an ardour!—withdrew it with such respect: she could almost find it in her heart to pity him.

He reported his ill success to my mamma with such respect as left impressions in his favour, and a belief that the matter would be brought on again; but by his own expressions to friends in town, whither he went directly, it was seen there was an end to the affair.

My sister was not wanting to herself on the occasion: “The man was a vain creature, too well knowing his advantages; her sister Clary might think it worth *her* while to engage such a man, but sincerely glad was she that she had rejected him.”

But when Mr. Lovelace returned to the country, he thought fit, on visiting my papa and mamma, to express a hope that however unhappy he might have been in the rejection of the wished-for alliance, he might be allowed to keep up an acquaintance with a family which he should always respect, and then unhappily it was immediately observed that his attentions were fixed on me.

My sister, as soon as he was gone, seemed desirous, in a spirit of bravado, to promote his address, should it be tendered; my mamma declaring that her only dislike of his alliance with either daughter was on account of his faulty morals, and my father, on being urged, admitted that he had had a letter from his son James, in which he expressed great dislikes to an alliance with Mr. Lovelace, on the score of his immoralities. Next day Lord M—— came to Harlowe Place and made a proposal for his nephew Lovelace in form, adding that he hoped Mr. Lovelace would not have such an answer from the younger sister as he had had from the elder.

In short, Mr. Lovelace's visits were admitted, but as to his addresses to me, with a reservation that nothing should be determined without my brother's sanction. He bore this with a resignation little expected from his temper, but it was easy to perceive that he had so good an opinion of himself as not to doubt that he would conquer.

And thus was he admitted almost on his own terms, for while my friends saw nothing in his behaviour but what was extremely respectful, they seemed to have taken a great liking to his conversation, while I "bought myself no more concerned in his visits than any other of the family.

But this indifference of my side was the means of procuring him one great advantage, for upon it was grounded that correspondence by letters which succeeded. The occasion was this :—

My uncle Hervey has a young gentleman intrusted to his care, whom he has thoughts of sending abroad a year or two hence, to make the grand tour, and finding Mr. Lovelace could give a good account of everything necessary for a young traveller to observe, he desired him to write down a description of the courts and countries he had visited, and what was most worthy of curiosity.

He consented, on condition that I would *direct* his subjects, as he called it; and as every one had heard his writing commended, and thought his relations might be agreeable amusements in winter evenings, and that he could have no opportunity to address me in them, since they were to be read in full assembly, it would have shown a particularity that a vain man would construe to his advantage had I been the only scrupulous person.

But I should own that in the letters he thus sent me he more than once enclosed one declaring his passion and complaining of my reserve. Of these I took no notice, and after he had sent me a third with the general one, he asked me the next time he came to Harlowe Place if I had received it. I told him I should never answer one so sent, and desired him not to write again, assuring him that if he did I would not write to him.

You cannot imagine how saucily the man looked, and he afterwards took occasion to say cunningly enough that if a man could not make a lady in courtship own herself pleased with him, it was *much* and oftentimes *more* to his purpose to make her angry *with* him.

Your most affectionate

CLARISSA.

January 15th.

THE moment, my dear, that Mr. Lovelace's visits were mentioned to my brother on his arrival from Scotland, he expressed his disapprobation, justifying his inveteracy by declaring that he had ever hated him since he had known him at college, and would never own me for a sister if I married him.

This antipathy I have heard accounted for in this manner:—

Mr. Lovelace was always noted for his vivacity and courage, and for the surprising progress he made in literature, while for diligence in study he had hardly his equal. This was his character at the university, and it gained him many friends, while those who did not love, feared him, by reason of the offence his vivacity made him too ready to give, and of the courage he showed in supporting it. This procured him many followers among the mischievous sort. No amiable character, you'll say, upon the whole.

But my brother's temper was not happier. His haughtiness could not bear a superiority; and those whom we fear more than love we are not far from hating. Having less command of his passions than the other, he was evermore the subject of his ridicule, so that they never met without quarrelling, and everybody, either from love or fear, siding with Lovelace, my brother had an uneasy time of it while both continued in the same college. It was the less wonder, therefore, that a young man, who is not noted for the gentleness of his temper, should resume an antipathy early begun and so deeply rooted.

Thus on my brother's return he found my sister ready to join him in his resentment against the man he hated. She utterly disclaimed all manner of regard for him. "Never liked him at all. His estate was encumbered. He kept no house—no equipage. The reason was easy to guess at." And then did she boast of, and my brother praised her for, refusing him. Both joined on all occasions to depreciate him.

Now and then when their vehemence carried them beyond all bounds, I thought it just to put in a word for him. This subjected me to reproach, so that when I could not change the subject I retired.

Their behaviour to him when they could not help seeing him was very disobliging, and at last they gave such loose to their passion that instead of withdrawing when he came, they threw themselves in his way to affront him.

Mr. Lovelace you may believe ill brooked this, but contented himself by complaining to me, adding that, but for my sake, my brother's treatment of him was not to be borne.

I was sorry for the merit this gave him, in his own opinion, and the more so as some of the affronts he received were too flagrant to be excused. But I told him that I was determined not to fall out with my brother if I could help it; and, since they could not see one another with temper, should be glad that he would not throw himself in my brother's way. He, I was sure, would not seek *him*.

He was nettled at my answer, but said he must bear his affronts if I must have it so. He hoped to show on this occasion that he had a command of his passions, and doubted not it would be attributed to a proper motive by a person of my generosity.

I must observe in his disfavour, that notwithstanding the merit he wanted to make of his patience upon my brother's ill treatment, I owed him no compliment for trying to conciliate with *him*. He showed such a contempt of my brother and sister, especially my brother, as was construed into a defiance of them, and I doubted not that, having so little encouragement from anybody, his pride would soon take fire.

But my brother's antipathy would not permit him to *wait* for such an event; and after several excesses, which Mr. Lovelace still returned with a haughtiness too much like that of the aggressor, my brother took upon himself to fill up the doorway once, when he came, as if to oppose his entrance; and, upon his asking for me, demanded what his business was with his sister.

The other, with a challenging air, told him he would answer a gentleman *any* question; but he wished that Mr. James Harlowe, who had of late given himself high airs, would remember that he was not *now* at college.

Just then the good Dr. Lewin, who had parted with me in my own parlour, came to the door, and, hearing the words, interposed between both gentlemen, having their hands upon their swords, and, telling Mr. Lovelace where I was, the latter burst by my brother to come to me, leaving him chafing he said like a hunted boar at bay.

After this, my father was pleased to hint that Mr. Lovelace's visits should be discontinued, and I, by his command, spoke a great deal plainer; but Mr. Lovelace is a man not easily brought to give up his purpose, especially on a point

wherein he protests his heart is so much engaged; and no absolute prohibition having been given, things went on for a while as before, till my brother again took occasion to insult Mr. Lovelace, when that unhappy rencontre followed, in which, as you have heard, my brother was wounded and disarmed, and on being brought home and giving us ground to suppose he was worse hurt than he was, and a fever ensuing, every one flamed out, and all was laid at my door.

Mr. Lovelace sent twice a day to inquire after my brother, and on the fourth day came in person, and received great incivilities from my two uncles, who happened to be there. My papa also was held from going to him with his sword in his hand, although he had the gout.

I fainted away with terror, seeing every one so violent; hearing his voice swearing he would not depart without seeing me, my mamma struggling with my papa, and my sister insulting me. When he was told how ill I was, he departed, vowing revenge.

He was ever a favourite with our domestics; and on this occasion they privately blamed everybody else, and reported his behaviour in such favourable terms, that those reports, and my apprehensions of the consequences, induced me to *read a letter* he sent me that night, it being written in the most respectful terms, offering to submit the whole to my decision, to *answer* it some days after.

To this unhappy necessity is owing our renewed correspondence; meantime I am extremely concerned to find that I am become the public talk. Your kind regard for my fame is so like the warm friend I have ever found you, that with redoubled obligation you bind me to be

Your ever grateful

CLARISSA.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

January 20th.

I HAVE been greatly hindered. Neither nights nor mornings have been my own. My mother has been very ill. These contentions and the fear of mischief from the animosity all have here against Mr. Lovelace she cannot bear. Yet would she but exert that authority which her fine talents give her, these family feuds might be extinguished.

I have besought my mother, who apprehends Mr. Lovelace's visits, and for fear of whom my uncles never stir

without arms and armed servants, to procure me permission to be your guest for a fortnight.

* * * *

Just now my mother brings news that permission is granted. I will put everything in order here, and be with you in two or three days.

Your affectionate

C. HARLOWE.

(Clarissa's letter to Miss Howe after her return home.)

February 20th.

I BEG you to excuse my not writing sooner. Alas, my dear, I have sad prospects! My brother and sister have found another lover for me; he is encouraged by everybody.

No wonder I was ordered home so suddenly. It was from fear I should have entered into any concert with Mr. Lovelace had I known their motive, apprehending I should dislike the man they had to propose. And well might they; for who do you think it is? No other than that Solmes. They are all determined too, my mother with the rest. Dear Excellence! how could she be thus brought over when I am assured that, on his first being proposed, she was pleased to say that had Mr. Solmes the Indies in possession, she should not think him deserving of her Clarissa.

I will now give you an account of the reception I met with on my return. My brother met me at the door, and gave me his hand when I stepped out of the chariot. He bowed very low. "Pray Miss, favour me." I thought it good humour, but found it mock respect; and so he led me in form to the great parlour, where were my father, mother, two uncles, and sister.

I was struck to the heart as I entered. They all kept their seats. I ran to my father and kneeled. Then to my mother. From both a cold salute.

After I had paid my duty to my uncles and my compliments to my sister, I was bid to sit down. My heart was full. I was forced to turn my face from them.

* * * *

My unbrotherly accuser stood forth and charged me with having received five or six visits from the man they all had such reason to hate, as he said, at Miss Howe's; and he bid me deny it if I could.

I owned I had in the three weeks past seen the person I presumed he meant, but he had always asked for Mrs. or Miss Howe, who would rather have excused his visits; but as they had no reason to forbid him their house, his rank and fortune entitled him to civility.

You see, my dear, I made not the plea I might have done!

My brother seemed ready to give loose to passion. My father's countenance portended a storm. My uncles whispered, my sister held up her hands. My mother said, "Let the child be heard." That was *her* kind word.

My uncle Antony said, in his rough manner, that "Surely I would not give them reason to apprehend I thought my grandfather's will had made me independent of them all. He could tell me it could be set aside."

"I did not know," I said, "that I had given occasion for this harshness." I was so much surprised at this reception, that I hoped my papa and mamma would give me leave to retire." No one gainsaying, I made my silent compliments and withdrew.

I went to my chamber, and there with my faithful Hannah deplored the determined face which the new proposal wore.

I had not recovered when I was sent for to tea. I begged by my maid to be excused, but on the repeated command went down with as much cheerfulness as I could assume.

Mr. Solmes came in before we had done tea. My uncle Antony presented him as a gentleman he had a particular friendship for. My father said, "Mr. Solmes is my friend, Clarissa Harlowe." My mother looked at him and at me. I at her, with eyes appealing for pity, while my brother and sister Sir'd him at every word.

* * * *

My humble thanks and duty to your honoured mother.

Your ever obliged

C. H.

(From Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

February 24th.

THEY drive on at a furious rate. The man lives here. Such terms, such settlements. That's the cry.

Oh, my dear! that I had no reason to decry the family fault. Immensely rich as they all are!

My father and mother avoid giving me opportunity of seeing them alone.

I have already stood the shock of three of this man's visits.

* * * *

It has been signified to me that it will be better if I do not go to church next Sunday. They are apprehensive Mr. Lovelace will be there with design to come home with me. Help me, dear Miss Howe, with your charming spirit. I never more wanted it.

February 25th. Evening.

WHAT my brother and sister have said of me, I cannot tell. I am in heavy disgrace with my papa.

* * * *

My heart is full. I must lay down my pen.

* * * *

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

March 2nd.

"TALK of the devil!" is an old saying. The lively wretch has just made me a visit. Lovelace is all resentment at the treatment you meet with, and full of apprehension they will carry their point.

I told him you would never be brought to think of Solmes, but that it may end in a composition that you will have neither.

"No man," he said, "whose fortunes and alliances were so considerable as his, ever had so little favor from a woman for whom he had borne so much," and complained of spies being set upon him to pry into his life and morals.

I told him *this was the more unfair upon him, as neither his life nor morals would stand fair inquiry!*

He smiled, and called himself *my servant!*

Adieu, dear friend,

A. HOWE.

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

March 3rd.

I HAVE both your letters at once. It is very unhappy, my dear, since your friends will have you marry, that a person of your merit should be addressed by such a succession of worthless creatures, who have nothing but their presumption for their excuse.

That these presumers appear not in this very unworthy light to *some of your friends*, is because their defects are not so striking to them as to others. And why? Shall I venture to tell you?—Because they are nearer their own standard. *Modesty*, after all, perhaps has a concern in it; for how should they think that a niece or sister of *theirs* is an angel? Where, indeed, is the man to be found with the least share of diffidence, that dares to look up to Miss Clarissa Harlowe? Oh, my dear, are such charming qualities to be sunk in such a marriage?

Wonder not, however, at your sister Bell's behaviour in this affair. Her outward eye, as you have owned, was from the first struck with the figure of the man she pretends to despise, and who, 'tis certain, despises her; but you have not told us that still she loves him above all men. Bell has a meanness in her very pride, and she has owned her love, her uneasy days and sleepless nights, and her revenge grafted upon it, to her favourite Betty Barnes. To lay herself in the power of a servant's tongue! Poor creature! But like little souls will find one another out, and mingle, as well as like great ones. This, however, she told the wench in strict confidence. And thus, by way of the *female round-about*, as Lovelace had the sauciness to say on such another occasion, in ridicule of our sex, Betty (pleased to be thought worthy of a secret) told it to one of her confidants, Miss Lloyd's Harriot, and Miss Lloyd to *me*.

I long for your next.

A. H.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

March 3rd.

Oh my dear friend, trial upon trial! I went down this morning to breakfast with an uneasy heart, wishing for an opportunity to appeal to my mamma when she retired afterwards to her own room; but unluckily there was the odious Solmes with assurance in his looks!

The creature must needs rise from his seat and take one that was next mine. I removed mine to a distance, and then down I sat abruptly enough.

He took the removed chair and drew it so near me that in sitting down he pressed upon my hoop, at which I was so offended that I removed to another. I own I had too little command of myself, but I could not help it; I knew

not what I did. I saw my papa was excessively displeased. When angry, no man's countenance ever shows it so much as my papa's. "Clarissa Harlowe," said he with a big voice, and there he stopp'd! "Sir!" said I, and curtsied. I trembled and put my chair nearer the wretch. I felt my face all in a glow.

"Sit by me, love," said my kind mamma, "and make tea."

I removed to her side with pleasure, and being thus indulgently put into employment, soon recovered myself, and in course of breakfast asked some questions of Mr. Solmes, which I would not have done, but to make up with my papa. "*Proud spirits may be brought to,*" whispered my sister to me with an air of triumph and scorn.

My mamma was all kindness and condescension. I asked her if she were pleased with the tea, she said "yes," softly, calling me *dear*; told me she was pleased with all I did. I was very proud of this encouraging goodness, and all blew over, as I hoped, between my papa and me, for he spoke kindly to me two or three times.

Before breakfast was over my papa withdrew with my mamma, telling her he wanted to speak to her. My brother gave himself some airs, which I understood well enough. But at last he rose and went away, my sister following him.

I saw what all this was for; so I stood up to go also, the man hemming up for a speech, rising and beginning to set his splay feet in an approaching posture. I curtsied "Your servant, Sir. The man cried "Madam" twice, and looked like a fool. But away I went—to find my brother. He was gone to walk in the garden with my sister.

I had just got to my room, and began to think of sending Hannah to beg an audience of my mamma, when Shorey, her woman, brought me her commands to attend her in her closet.

My papa, Hannah told me, had just gone out of it with a positive, angry countenance. Then I as much dreaded the audience, as I had wished for it before.

I went down; but approached her trembling, and my heart in visible palpitations.

She saw my concern. Holding out her kind arms, "Come kiss me, my dear," said she, with a smile like a sunbeam breaking through the cloud that overshadowed her benign aspect. "Why flutters my jewel so?"

This sweetness, with her goodness just before, confirmed

my apprehensions. My mamma saw the bitter pill wanted gilding.

"O my mamma!" was all I could say; and I clasped my arms round her neck, and my face sunk into her bosom.

"My child! restrain your feelings," said she; "I dare not trust myself with you." And my tears trickled down her bosom, as hers bedewed my neck.

Oh the words of kindness all to be expressed in vain that fell from her lips!

"Lift up your sweet face, my best child, my own Clarissa. Oh my daughter! best beloved of my heart, lift up a face ever precious to me. Why these sobs? Is an apprehended duty so affecting a thing that before I can speak you can guess at what I have to say to you? I am glad then that I am spared the pains of breaking to you what has been made a reluctant task to me."

And drawing her chair near mine, she put her arms round my neck, and my cheek wet with tears next her own.

"You know, my dear," she said, "what I undergo every day for peace. Your papa is a good man, but will neither be controlled nor persuaded. You are a good child," she was pleased to say, "you would not wilfully break that peace, which it costs me so much to preserve. Obedience is better than sacrifice. Oh, my Clary! I see your perplexity (loosing her arm and rising, not willing I should see how much she herself was affected). I will leave you a moment. Answer me not (for I was essaying to speak, and had, as soon as she took her dear cheek from mine, dropped down on my knees, my hands clasped and lifted up in a supplicating manner): I am not prepared for your expostulations. I will leave you to recover from your agitation. And I charge you, on my blessing, that all this my truly maternal tenderness be not thrown away upon you."

And then she withdrew into the next apartment; wiping her eyes, as she went: mine overflowed.

She returned, having recovered more steadiness.

Still on my knees, I had thrown my face across her chair.

"Look up to me, my dear Clary. No sullenness, I hope?"

"No, indeed, my revered mamma." And I arose. I bent my knee.

She raised me. "No kneeling to me but with knees of duty and compliance. Your heart must bend. It is

absolutely determined. Prepare yourself therefore to receive your *papa*, when he visits you by-and-by. On this quarter of an hour depends the peace of my future life, the satisfaction of the family, and your own security from a man of violence; and I charge you *besides*, on my blessing, that you think of being Mrs. Solmes."

There went the dagger to my heart, and down I sunk. When I recovered, I found myself in the arms of my Hannah, my sister's Betty holding open my palm, my linen scented with hartshorn, and my mamma gone. Had I been less kindly treated, I had stood it all with less visible emotion, but to be bid on the blessing of a mother so dearly beloved to think of being Mrs. Solmes, what a denunciation was that!

Shorey came in with a message, delivered in her solemn way. "Your mamma, Miss, is concerned for your disorder, she expects you down in an hour, and bid me say that she then hopes everything from your duty."

Within that time my mamma came up to me.

"Come, my dear," she said, "we will go into your library."

She took my hand, led the way, made me sit down by her, and after she had inquired how I did, began in a strain as if she supposed I had made use of the intervening space to overcome all my objections. She was pleased to tell me that my *papa* and she, in order to spare me, had taken the whole affair upon themselves.

Just then came my *papa*, with a sternness in his looks that made me tremble. He took two or three turns about my chamber, and then said to my mamma, who was silent as soon as she saw him,—"*My dear*, dinner is near ready, let us have you soon down, your daughter in your hand, if worthy of the name." And down he went, casting his eyes upon me with a look so stern that I was unable to say one word to him.

My mamma called me her good child, and kissed me, told me my *papa* should not know that I had made such opposition. "*Come*, my dear, shall we go down?" and took my hand.

This made me start. "*What*, Madam, go down, to let it be supposed we were talking of preparation. O my beloved mamma, command me not upon such a supposition."

"And do you design not to give me hope. Perverse girl!" rising and flinging from me. "When I see you next, let me

know what blame I have to cast upon myself for my indulgence to you."

She made a little stop at the chamber door.

"O madam," cried I, "whose favour can I hope for, if I lose my mamma's?"

As I must write as I have opportunity, the formality of *super* and *subscription* will be excused, for I need not say how much I am

Your sincere and affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

[Clarissa's next letter * is filled with Mrs. Harlowe's oft-repeated arguments in favour of a marriage with Solmes, and poor Clarissa's pleas for mercy.—ED.]

(Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.)

Saturday, March 4th.

I HAVE not been in bed all night.

About eight, Shorey came to me from my mamma, with orders to attend her in her chamber.

My mamma had been weeping I saw; but her aspect seemed to be less tender than the day before, and this struck me with awe as soon as I entered her presence, and gave a damp to my spirits.

"Sit down, Clary Harlowe; I shall talk to you by-and-by;" and was looking into a drawer, among laces and linen, with an absent kind of manner.

After some time, she asked me coldly what directions I had given for the day?

I gave her the bill of fare, if it pleased her to approve of it.

She made an alteration in it, but with an air so cold and so solemn, as added to my emotion.

"Mr. Harlowe talks of dining out to-day, I think, at my brother Antony's."

Mr. Harlowe—not my papa! Have I not then a papa, thought I.

"Sit down when I bid you."

I sat down.

"You look very sullen, Clary."

"I hope not, Madam."

"If children would always be children, parents—and there she stopped.

* Omitted.

She then went to her toilet, looked in the glass, and gave a sigh—saying presently,

“I don’t love to see the girl look so sullen.”

“Indeed, Madam, I am not sullen.” And I arose, and, turning from her, drew out my handkerchief, for the tears ran down my cheeks. I thought, by the glass before me, I saw the *mother* in her softened eye cast towards me, but her words confirmed it not.

“Tears of penitence, and sobs of perverseness,” said she, “are very well suited. You may go to your chamber; I shall talk to you by-and-by.”

I curtsied.

“Mock me not with outward gesture; the heart, Clary, is what I want.”

* * *

I could hold out no longer, but threw myself at her feet: “O, my dearest mamma, let me know all I am to suffer. I can bear it, but your displeasure I cannot bear.”

“Leave me, Clarissa—limbs so supple, will so stubborn. Rise, I tell you!”

“I cannot rise! I will not leave my mamma without her being reconciled to me (wrapping my arms about her as I kneeled; she struggling to get from me; my face lifted to hers, eyes running over). “You must not tear yourself from me!” (for still the dear lady struggled, as if she knew not what to do). “I will neither rise nor leave you till you say you are not angry with me.”

“Oh, thou ever-moving child of my heart!” (folding her dear arms about my neck, as mine embraced her knees). “Why was this task! You have discomposed me beyond expression! Leave me, my dear! I won’t be angry with you if I can help it, if you’ll be good.”

I arose trembling, and, hardly knowing what I did, withdrew to my chamber. My Hannah followed me, as soon as she heard me quit my mamma’s presence, and with salts and spring-water kept me from fainting. It was near two hours before I could recover myself to take up my pen, to write to you how unhappily my hopes have ended.

My mamma went down to breakfast. I was not fit to appear, but if I had been better, I suppose I should not have been sent for, my papa’s hint being to bring me down if worthy of the name of daughter. That, I doubt, I never shall be in *his* opinion, if he change not his mind as to this Mr. Solmes.

[In Clarissa's next letter * to her friend she describes her unhappy position at home: forbidden to leave her room even for her meals, and obliged to correspond with Miss Howe clandestinely, through "her faithful Hannah."—ED.]

(Extract from letter.)

MY father is come home from the dinner at uncle Antony's, and my brother with him. Late as it is, they are all shut up together. Not a door opens, not a soul stirs. Hannah, as she moves up and down is shunned as a person infected.

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Twelve o'clock.

The angry assembly is broken up.

This moment the keys of everything are taken from me. It was proposed to send for me down, but my papa said he could not bear to look upon me. Shorey brought the message. The tears stood in her eyes when she delivered it.

You, my dear, are happy! May you always be so! And then I can never be wholly miserable. Adieu, my beloved friend!

C. H.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

March 5th.

HANNAH has just brought me from the place in the garden wall† a letter from Mr. Lovelace, signed also by Lord M.

He tells me that Mr. Solmes boasts that he is to be married to the shiest woman in England, and he desires my leave in company with my lord to make proposals to my father that must be accepted.

He presumes to be very earnest with me to give him a meeting some night in my father's garden, attended by whom I please!

Really, my dear, were you to see his letter, you would think I had given him great encouragement, or that he were sure my friends would drive me into a foreign protection; for he has the boldness to offer, in my lord's name, an asylum to me, should I be tyrannically treated in Solmes's behalf.

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All my relations are met. They are at breakfast together. Solmes is expected. I am excessively uneasy. I must lay down my pen.

* Omitted.

† The spot selected for depositing letters.

They are resolved to break my heart; my poor Hannah is disgracefully discharged, and that bold creature, Betty Barnes, directed to wait on me.

I was so very earnest to see the poor maid before she went, that, to oblige me, as she said, Betty went down with my request.

The worthy creature was as earnest to see me. And the favour was granted in presence of Shorey and Betty.

I thanked her, when she came up, for her past service to me.

Her heart was ready to break. And she fell vindicating her fidelity and love, and disclaiming any mischief she had ever made.

I told her that those who occasioned her being turned out of my service, made no question of her integrity, that it was an indignity levelled at me, that I was very sorry for it, and hoped she would meet with as good a service.

"Never, never," wringing her hands, a mistress she loved so well. And the poor creature ran on in my praises, and in professions of love to me.

I gave her a little linen, some laces, and other odd things, and, instead of four pounds, which were due to her, ten guineas; and said, if ever I were again allowed to be my own mistress, I would think of her first.

Thus have I been forced to part with the faithful Hannah. If you can recommend a place worthy of her, do so for my sake.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

March 7th.

THEY think that they have done mightily by turning away my poor Hannah, but as long as the liberty of the garden and my poultry visits are allowed, they will be mistaken, though I know that Mrs. Betty has orders to watch me.

Tuesday night.

SINCE I wrote the above, I sent a letter by Shorey to my mamma. I directed her to give it into her own hand. I enclose the copy. You'll see.

"HONOURED MADAM,—

"Having acknowledged to you that I had received letters from Mr. Lovelace, full of resentment, and that I answered them purely to prevent further mischief, I think it

my duty to acquaint you that another letter from him has since come, in which he is earnest with me to permit him to wait on my papa, or you, in a pacific way, accompanied by Lord M.—On which I beg your commands.

* * * *

“May I beg of you to consider whether my proposal for a single life, which I will adhere to, is not the best way to get rid of Mr. Lovelace’s pretensions with honour.

“I remain, honoured Madam,

“Your unhappy but dutiful daughter,

“CLARISSA HARLOWE.”

Wednesday morning.

I HAVE just received an answer to the enclosed, and send you some extracts from it.

My dear mamma says: “I don’t know what to write about, that man of violence. What can you think of it that such a family as ours should have such a rod held over it?

You were once all my comfort, you made all my hardships tolerable. But now—— However, nothing, it is plain, can move you.

“I should have been glad to see the letter you tell me of. O Clarissa, what think you of receiving letters which ‘honour and prudence’ forbid you to show to a mother? But I will not be in your secret, and must have you to take your own method in replying, but let him know it will be the last letter you will write, and if you do write, I won’t see it, so seal it up and give it to Shorey, and she——. Yet do not think I give you license to write.

“I charge you burn this letter, there is too much of the mother in it, to a daughter so unaccountably obstinate. And write not again to me. I can do nothing for you, but you can do everything for yourself.

[Enclosed with Mrs. Harlowe’s letter was one from Mr. Harlowe to Clarissa, the conclusion of which sufficiently illustrates the character of the whole.—ED.]

“I have no patience with you. Continue banished from my presence, undutiful as you are, till you know how to conform to my will. Ungrateful creature! Write no more to me till you are convinced of your duty to

“A JUSTLY INCENSED FATHER.”

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

March 9th.

I HAVE another letter from Mr. Lovelace, although I have not answered his former one. He knows all that passes here,—my confinement, Hannah's dismission, and all almost as soon as things happen. He is excessively uneasy upon what he hears, and solicits me to engage my honour to him never to have Mr. Solmes. I think I can safely promise him that.

He is full of the favour of the ladies of his family to me : to whom, nevertheless, I am personally a stranger ; except, that once I saw Miss Patty Montague.

It is natural, I believe, for a person to be the more desirous of making new friends, in proportion as she loses the favour of old ones : yet, had I rather appear amiable in the eyes of my relations, and in yours, than in those of all the world besides. But these four ladies of his family have such excellent characters, that one cannot but wish to be thought well of by them.

Curiosity at present is all my motive : nor will there ever, I hope, be a stronger.

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(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

March 10th.

I HAVE no patience with any of the people you are with. How do you know that you are not punishable for being the cause, though to your own loss, that the will of your grandfather is not complied with ? Wills are sacred things, child. Your grandfather knew the family failing and what a noble spirit you had ; he therefore put it in your power to do good, and so to make up for the defects of the family. Were it to me, I would resume it, indeed I would.

As to this odious Solmes, I wonder not at your answer to him. I was twice in the wretch's company ; at one of the times your Lovelace was there, I need not mention to you, who have such a *pretty curiosity*, though at present—"only a curiosity," you know the unspeakable difference ; Lovelace entertained the company in his gay way, and made every one laugh at his stories. Solmes laughed too. It was *his* laugh ; his muscles have never been able to acquire a risible tone—his very smile is so little natural to his features, that it appears in him as hideous as the grin of a man in malice.

I have been broke in upon by my mamma.

"I cannot but think, Nancy," said she, "that there is a little hardship in Miss Harlowe's case; and yet, as her mamma says, it is a grating thing to have a child, who was always noted for her duty, in *smaller* points, to stand in opposition to her parents' will in the *greater*. This man—Solmes—is surely preferable to a libertine; one, too, who has had a duel with her own brother." Then came up Solmes's great estate, and his good management of it. "A little *too near* indeed" was the word! "Oh! how money lovers," thought I, "will palliate!" Yet my mamma is a princess in spirits to this Solmes!

Mr. Hickman* is expected here this evening. I have desired him to inquire after Lovelace's life and conversation in Town. Don't expect a good account of either.

Your truly affectionate,

ANNA HOWE.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

March 11th.

I HAVE had such taunting messages, and such avowals of ill-offices, brought me from my brother and sister, if I do not comply with their wills (delivered, too, with provoking sauciness by Betty Barnes), that I have thought it proper, before I entered upon my address to my uncles, to expostulate a little with *them*.

I therefore wrote to my brother and sister as follows:—

"Treated as I am, in a great measure by your instigations, I must be allowed to expostulate with you on the occasion. Permit me, in the first place, to remind you that I am your *sister*—not your *servant*; and that, therefore, the passionate language brought from you is neither worthy of my character to bear, or yours to offer.

"It is a sad thing to have it to say, never having given you cause of offence, that I have in *you* a *brother*, but not a *friend*.

"Let me observe that the principal end of a young gentleman's education at the university is to teach him to reason justly, and subdue the violence of his passions; but I am truly sorry to have cause to say, I have heard it remarked that your uncontrolled passions are not a credit to your liberal education.

* Miss Howe's accepted lover.

"I hope, sir, that you will excuse the freedom I have taken with you.

"Sisterly affection, I do assure you, sir, and not the pertness which of late you have been so apt to impute to me, is my motive in this hint. Let me invoke your returning kindness, I beseech you, for I am, and ever will be,

"Your affectionate sister,
"CL. HARLOWE."

This is my brother's answer:—

(To Miss Clarissa Harlowe.)

"I know there will be no end to your impertinent scribble if I do not write. I know not what wit in a woman is good for, but to make her overvalue herself and despise everybody else. Yours, Miss Pert, has set you above your duty; but go on, and your mortification will be the greater. It shall, I assure you, if I can make it so; so long as you prefer that villanous Lovelace, who is hated by all your family. We see what a hold he has on your heart. In me, notwithstanding your saucy lecturing, you still have a friend if it be not your own fault, but if you will still think of such a husband as that Lovelace, never expect anything from,

"JAS. HARLOWE."

I will now give you a copy of my letter to my sister and her answer:—

"In what, my dear sister, have I offended you, that instead of endeavouring to soften my father's anger against me, you should join to aggravate his displeasure, and my mamma's. Make but my case your own, my dear Bella; and suppose you were commanded to marry Mr. Lovelace (to whom you are believed to have an antipathy), would you not think it a very grievous injunction?—Yet cannot your dislike to Mr. Lovelace be greater than mine is to Mr. Solmes.

"There was a time when Mr. Lovelace was thought reclaimable. I am far from wishing to make the experiment. Nevertheless, I will say, that, if I have not a regard for him, the disgraceful methods taken to compel me to receive the addresses of such a man as Mr. Solmes are enough to inspire it. Do you, my sister, compare the two men, in their birth, education, manners, air, and in their fortunes too, and judge of both. Yet, with all my heart I will live single if that will do.

"I cannot live in displeasure and disgrace!—I would oblige all my friends, but will it be just, will it be honest, to marry a man I cannot endure?"

"Pity then, my dearest Bella, my sister, my companion, as you used to be when I was happy, and plead for

"Your ever affectionate

"CL. HARLOWE."

The sister's answer:—

(To Miss Clary Harlowe.)

"LET it be agreeable or not, in your opinion, I shall speak my mind in relation to this detested Lovelace. You are a fond, foolish girl, with all your wisdom, and as to your cant of living single, no one will believe you.

"As to the encouragement you pretend he received formerly from our family, it was before we knew him to be so vile, and the proofs that had such force upon us ought to have some upon you—and would, had you not been the forward girl you are.

"Write as often as you will, this will be the last letter you shall have upon this subject from

"ARABELLA HARLOWE."

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Sunday night, March 12th.

THIS Lovelace gives me great uneasiness. He is extremely bold and rash. He was this afternoon at our church, in hopes to see me I suppose, and yet, if he had such hopes, his usual intelligence must have failed him.

Shorey was at church and a principal part of her observation was upon his haughty behaviour, when he turned round to our family pew. My papa was there with my mamma and sister. My brother, happily, was not! They all came home in disorder. Nor did the congregation mind anybody but him it being his first appearance there since the unhappy encounter.

Shorey says that he watched my mamma's eye and bowed to her and she returned the compliment. He always admired my mamma. She would not, I believe, have hated him, had she not been bid, and had it not been for the encounter between him and her only son.

My father, it seems, is more and more incensed against me and all are angry at my mamma for returning his compliment.

They are all in consultation.

In haste, your affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

(Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.)

March 13th.

IN vain dost thou* press me to go to town, while I am in such an uncertainty with this proud beauty. All the ground I have hitherto gained with her is entirely owing to her concern for the safety of people whom I have reason to hate.

The lady's malevolent brother has now, as I told thee at M. Hall, introduced another man the most unpromising in his person and qualities, the most formidable in his offers, that has yet appeared.

This man has captivated every soul of the Harlowes. *Soul!* did I say?—There is not a soul among them but my charmer's and she is actually confined and otherwise maltreated, by a father the most gloomy and positive, at the instigation of a brother the most arrogant and selfish. But thou knowest their characters.

Is it not a confounded thing to be in love with one who is the daughter the sister the niece of a family I despise? That love increasing with her—what shall I call it? 'Tis not scorn, 'tis not pride, 'tis not the insolence of an adored beauty;—but 'tis to *virtue*, it seems, that my difficulties are owing.

But what a mind must that be, which, though not virtuous itself, admires not virtue in another? My visit to Arabella was owing to a mistake of the sisters into which, as thou hast heard me say I was led by a blundering uncle who was to introduce me (but lately come from abroad) to the Divinity, as I thought; but, instead of her, carried me to a mere mortal. And much difficulty had I with so fond and so forward a mortal, to get off without forfeiting all with a family that I intended should give me a goddess.

I have boasted that I was once in love before. It was in my early manhood, with that Quality jilt whose infidelity I have vowed to revenge upon the sex. . . . But now I am indeed in love. I can think of nothing but the *divine* Clarissa.

And with revenge I glow; for dost thou think I can bear the insults of this stupid family?

* * * *

And what my motive, dost thou ask? No less than this. That my beloved shall find no protection out of my family;

* These gentlemen affected what they called the Roman style, to wit, "Thee" and "Thou," and it was an agreed rule with them to take in good part whatever freedoms they treated each other with.

for, if I know hers fly she must, or have the man she hates. This, therefore, if I take my measures right and my familiar fail me not, will secure her mine in spite of them all; in spite of her own inflexible heart: mine without condition, without reformation promises. Then shall I have all the rascally members of the family come creeping to me, I prescribing to them and bringing that sordidly-imperious brother to kneel at the footstool of my throne.

All my fear arises from the little hold I have in the heart of this charming frost-piece. Such a constant glow upon her lovely features, eyes so sparkling, limbs so divinely turned; youth so blooming, air so animated,—to have a heart so impenetrable. And *I* the hitherto successful Lovelace, the suitor. How can it be? Yet there are people and I have talked with some of them, who remember that she was *born*. Her nurse boasts of her maternal offices in her earliest infancy, so that there is full proof that she came not from above all at once an angel! How then can she be so impenetrable!

Perdition catch my soul, but I do love her.

Else, could I bear the revilings of her implacable family? Else, could I basely creep about—not her proud father's house—but his paddock—and garden-walls? *Else*, should I think myself amply repaid if the fourth, fifth, or sixth midnight stroll, through unfrequented paths and over briary inclosures afford me a few cold lines, the purport only to let me know that she values the most worthless person of her very worthless family more than she values me, and that she would not write at all but to induce me to bear insults which un-*man* me to bear! My lodging in the intermediate way at a wretched alehouse—disguised like an inmate of it.

Was ever hero in romance called upon to harder trials?—fortune, family, reversionary grandeur, on my side—such a wretched fellow for my competitor! Must I not be deplorably in love that can go through these difficulties encounter these contempts? By my soul I am half ashamed of myself!

Yet is it not a glory to love *her* whom every one who sees her loves and reveres?

Thou art curious to know if it be possible that such a universal lover as I can be confined to one object. Thou knowest nothing of this charming creature that can put such a question to me. All that is excellent in her sex is in this

lady! . . . Taking together person, mind, and behaviour, should we not acknowledge in the words of Shakespear the justice of the universal voice in her favour:—

For sev'ral virtues
Have I liked sev'ral women. Never any
With so full soul, but some defect in her
Did quarrel with the noblest grace she owed,
And put it to the foil. But She! Oh She!
So perfect and so peerless, is created
Of ev'ry creature's best.

Then there are so many stimulatives to such a spirit as mine in this affair besides love, such a field for stratagem and contrivance which thou knowest to be the delight of my heart. Then the rewarding end of all,—to carry off such a girl as this, in spite of all her watchful and implacable friends; and in spite of a prudence and reserve that I never met with in any of the sex. What a triumph!—what a triumph over the whole sex! And then such a revenge to gratify, which is only at present politically reined-in, eventually to break forth with the greater fury. Is it possible, thinkest thou, that there can be room for a thought that is not of her, and devoted to her?

By advices this moment received I have reason to think that I shall have occasion for thee here. Hold thyself in readiness to come down upon the first summons.

Let Belton, and Mowbray, and Tourville likewise prepare themselves. I have a great mind to contrive a method to send James Harlowe to travel for improvement. Never was there Booby-Squire that more wanted it. Could I but put it in execution without being suspected to have a hand in it. This I am resolved upon, if I have not his sister, I will have *him*.

There is at present a likelihood for glorious mischief, a confederacy has been raised against me, owing to a visit I made yesterday to their church—a good place to begin a reconciliation in were the heads of the family Christians. But they were filled with terror it seems, at my entrance, and I saw in their countenances that they expected something extraordinary to follow, yet not a hair of their stupid heads do I intend to hurt.

You shall all have your directions in writing, if there be occasion. But I dare say there will be no need but to show your faces in my company.

Such faces never could four men show—Mowbray's so

fierce and so fighting, Belton's so pert and so pimplly, Tourville's so fair and so foppish, thine so rough and so resolute. And *I* your leader!

And now in royal style, I bid thee heartily

Farewell.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

March 16th.

HAVING met with such bad success in my application to my relations,* I have taken a step that will surprise you. I have written myself to Mr. Solmes. Here is his answer, in which he has certainly had help, for I have seen a letter of his indifferently worded and poorly spelt:—

[In her appeal to him Clarissa begs hard for freedom from his importunities, pointing out the difference in their tempers and inclinations, and proposing to rely on his generosity, on his regard for *himself*, for his compliance with her request, by which compliance he would lay her under the highest obligations, &c.]

(Mr. Solmes to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.)

Thursday, March 16th.

DEAREST MISS,

Your letter has had a very contrary effect upon me to what you seem to have expected from it. It has doubly convinced me of the excellency of your mind and the honour of your disposition. Call it *selfish* or what you please, I must persist in my suit, and happy shall I be if by patience and perseverance and a steady and unalterable devoir, I may at last overcome the difficulty laid in my way.

As I presume no other person is in the way, I will contentedly wait the issue of this matter. And, forgive me, dearest Miss, but a person should sooner persuade me to give up to him my estate, as an instance of my generosity, because he could not be happy without it, than I would a much more valuable treasure, to promote the felicity of another, and make his way easier to circumvent myself.

Pardon me, but I must persevere, though I am sorry you suffer on my account, as you are pleased to think, for I never before saw the lady I could love, and while there is any hope, and that you remain undisposed of to some other happier man, I must and will be

Your faithful and obsequious admirer,

ROGER SOLMES.

* Clarissa refers here to two letters addressed by her to her uncles, bespeaking their kind efforts in her behalf with her parents, to prevent Mr. Solmes from pursuing her with his addresses, and to which appeals unfavourable answers had been sent. — Ed.

(Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.)

March 17th.

I RECEIVE with great pleasure the assurances of your loyalty and love. And let our trusty friends named in my last know that I do.

* * * *

Thou hadst best come to me here in thy old corporal's coat, thy servant out of livery and on familiar terms with thee as a distant relation.

The people here, at the White Hart, are poor but honest, and have gotten it into their heads that I am a man of quality in disguise, and there is no reining in their officious respect. There is a pretty little smirking daughter, seventeen six days ago. I call her my Rosebud. Her grandmother (for there is no mother), a good neat old woman as ever filled a wicker-chair in a chimney corner, has besought me to be merciful to her.

This is the right way with me.

This simple chit, for there is a simplicity about her thou wilt be highly pleased with, I love her for her humility, her officiousness, and even her innocence. She will be a pretty amusement to thee while I combat with the weather, and dodge and creep about the walls of Harlowe Place. Thou wilt see in her mind all that her superiors have been taught to conceal, in order to render themselves less natural and more undelightful.

But I charge thee that thou respect my Rosebud. She is the only flower of fragrance that has blown in this vicinage for ten years past, or will for ten years to come.

I have examined the little heart. She has made me her confidant. She owns she could love Johnny Barton very well, and Johnny Barton, who is a young carpenter, has told her he could love her better than any maiden he ever saw. But, alas ! it must not be thought of. Why not be thought of?—She don't know ! And then she sighed. But Johnny has an aunt, who will give him a hundred pounds when his time is out, and her father cannot give her but a few things or so, to set her out with. And though Johnny's mother says she knows not where Johnny would have a prettier or notabler wife, yet—and then she sighed again—what signifies talking ? “ I would not have Johnny be unhappy and poor for me ! For what good would that do *me*, you know, sir ! ”

What would I give (by my soul, my angel will indeed reform me, if her friends' implacable folly ruin us not both !)

—what would I give to have so innocent and so good a heart as either my Rosebud's or Johnny's.

Meantime I make it my rule, whenever I have committed a capital enormity, to do some good by way of atonement, and as I believe I am a pretty deal indebted on that score, I intend before I leave these parts (successfully shall I leave them, I hope, or I shall be tempted to do double the mischief by way of revenge, though not to my Rosebud any), to join a hundred pounds to Johnny's aunt's hundred pounds, to make one innocent couple happy. I repeat, therefore, spare thou my Rosebud.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Saturday night, March 18th.

I HAVE been frightened out of my wits. I went down, under the usual pretence, in hopes to find something from you. Concerned at my disappointment, I was returning from the woodhouse,* when I heard a rustling, as of somebody behind a stack of wood. I was extremely surprised to behold a man coming from behind the furthestmost stack. O, thought I, at that moment, the sin of a prohibited correspondence!

The moment I saw him he besought me not to be frightened, and still nearer approaching me, threw open a horseman's coat, and who should it be but Mr. Lovelace. I attempted to scream the moment I saw a man, and again when I saw who it was, but I had no voice; and had I not caught hold of a prop which supported the old roof I should have sunk.

I had hitherto, as you know kept him at distance, and as I recovered myself, judge of my first emotions when I recollected his character from every mouth of my family, and his enterprising temper, and found myself alone with him in a place so near a by-lane and so remote from the house.

But his respectful behaviour soon dissipated these fears and gave me others, lest we should be seen together and information of it given to my brother, the consequences of which, I could readily think, would be, if not further mischief, an imputed assignation, and then a stricter confinement, a forfeited correspondence with you, my beloved friend, and a pretence for the most violent compulsion.

As soon as I could speak, I warmly expressed my dis-

* Where under a marked brick in the wall Hannah and Miss Howe's man Robin received and deposited the young ladies' letters to each other, Clarissa being free only to go to her poultry close by.

pleasure, and told him that he cared not how much he exposed me to the resentments of my friends, provided he could gratify his impetuous humour, and I commanded him to leave the place that moment. I was hurrying from him, when he threw himself at my feet, beseeching my stay one moment.

I was very uneasy to be gone, and the more as the night came on apace, but there was no getting from him till I had heard a great deal more of what he had to say.

As he hoped that I would one day make him the happiest man in the world, he asked me if I would receive a letter from his aunt Lawrance on this occasion, for his aunt Sadleir, he said, having lately lost her only child, hardly looked into the world or thought of it farther than to wish him married, and, preferably to all the women in the world, with me.

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To be sure, my dear, there is a great deal in what the man said—I may be allowed to say this without an imputed *throb*. But I told him that although I had great honour for the ladies he was related to, I should not choose to receive such a letter, and I also told him that, however greatly I thought myself obliged to Lady Betty Lawrance if this offer came from herself, yet it was easy to see to what it led. It might look like vanity in me to say that this urgency in him, on this occasion, wore the face of art, in order to engage me into measures I might not easily extricate myself from.

There was light enough to distinguish that he looked very grave upon this, and indeed he has raised himself in my opinion by the personal reverence which he paid me during the whole conference. And I will own to you that his arguments (drawn from the disgraceful treatment I meet with), of what I may expect, make me think that I shall be under an obligation to be either the one man's or the other's. And if so, I fancy I shall not incur your blame, were I to say *which* of the two it must be. You have said, which it must not be. But, O my dear, the single life is by far the most eligible to me: indeed it is. And I yet hope to obtain the blessing of making that option.

I got back without observation, but the apprehension that I should not, gave me great uneasiness and made me begin my letter in a greater flutter than he gave me cause to be in, except at the first seeing him, for then indeed my spirits failed me, and it was a particular felicity that in such a

place, in such a fright, and alone with him, I fainted not away.

Your affectionate friend,

CL. HARLOWE.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

March 21st.

I AM now to give you the particulars of an effort made by my friends through the good Mrs. Norton.*

They sent to her yesterday to be here to-day to take their instructions and to try what she could do with me. They sent for this good woman for whom they know I have a filial regard. She found assembled my father, mother, brother, sister, uncles, and aunt Hervey. My brother acquainted her with all that had passed since she had seen me. My mother spoke next. "Oh my good Mrs. Norton," said the dear lady, "could you have thought that my and *your* Clarissa was capable of such determined opposition to parents so indulgent? See what you can do with her. Her father had concluded everything with Mr. Solmes not doubting her compliance. Such noble settlements! Such advantages to the family! Mrs. Norton, if you are convinced that it is a child's duty to submit to her parents will you try your influence over her? If any lady can prevail, it is you."

The good woman asked whether she was permitted to expostulate with them before coming to me.

My arrogant brother said she was sent for to expostulate with his sister, not with them.

"Be assured of this, Mrs. Norton," said my father in an angry tone, "that we will not be baffled by her. We will not appear like fools in the matter, so she had better make a merit of obedience, for comply she shall if I live, independent as she thinks my father's indiscreet bounty made her of me. An unjust bequest! If she marry that vile Lovelace I will litigate every shilling with her. Tell her so, and that the will shall be set aside."

My uncles joined with equal heat. My brother was violent in his declarations; my sister vehement on the same side. My aunt Hervey was pleased to say there was no article so proper for parents to govern in as marriage, and it was fit mine should be obliged.

Thus instructed, the good woman came to me. She was very earnest for me to comply; but when she saw what an

* Formerly governess to Clarissa.

aversion I had to the man, she lamented with me their resolution, and then examined into the sincerity of my declaration that I would gladly compound to live single.

Of this being satisfied, she undertook to be guarantee for me on that score.

She went, but soon returned in tears.

"My proposal was an artifice. Nothing but marrying Solmes should do."

* * * *

My brother told the good woman that her whining nonsense did but harden me. . . . He added that she might once more go to me, but that if she prevailed not, he should suspect that the man they all hated had found a way to attach *her* to his interest.

Everybody blamed him for this unworthy reflection. It greatly affected the good woman, nevertheless he said, and no one contradicted him, that if she could not prevail upon her "sweet child," she had best withdraw till she was sent for and so leave her "sweet child" to her father's management.

She told him that, however she might be ridiculed, she must say there never was a sweeter of her sex, and that she had ever found that by gentleness I might be prevailed upon, even against my own opinion.

My aunt said it was worth while to consider what Mrs. Norton said and that she had doubted whether I had been begun with by such methods as generous tempers are influenced by in cases where their hearts are supposed to be opposite to the will of their friends.

My mother said she must own that the reception I met with on my return from Miss Howe, and the manner in which Mr. Solmes's proposal was made before I had an opportunity to converse with him, were not what she had approved of.

She was silenced by my father.

"My dear, you have ever something to say for this rebel of a girl.

"Mrs. Norton, go up to her once more, and if gentleness will do, be gentle; if not, never make use of that plea again."

She came to me and repeated these passages in tears, but I told her, after what had passed, she could not prevail upon me.

Folding me to her bosom, "I leave you, my dearest Miss," she said, "because I *must*. Let me beseech

you do nothing rashly. If all be true, Mr. Lovelace cannot deserve you. If you comply, it is your duty to comply."

"Consider, my dear Mrs. Norton," said I, "it is not a small thing that is insisted on. *It is for my life.*"

"I consider everything, my dear. Do you only consider that if by pursuing your own will, and rejecting theirs, you should be unhappy, you will be deprived of that consolation which those have who have been directed by their parents. I must go. I dread to go down, they will have no patience with me."

I thought when she went away the better half of my heart went with her.

I listened to the reception she met with down stairs,

"Will she, or will she not be Mrs. Solmes? None of your whining communications, Mrs. Norton."

You may guess who said this.

"If I must speak so briefly, Miss will sooner *die.*"

"This, sir," said my brother, "is your meek daughter, Mrs. Norton's *sweet* child. Well, Goody, you may return to your own habitation. I am commanded to forbid you any correspondence with this perverse girl for a month to come as you value the favour of the family."

And uncontradicted he shewed her to the door, no doubt with that air of cruel insult which the haughty rich can show to the unhappy low who have not pleased them.

What measures will they fall upon next? Adieu, my dear.
C. H.

March 21st.

How willingly would my dear mother show kindness to me if she were permitted. This morning, Shorey delivered the following condescending letter:—

(Extracts from Mrs. Harlowe's letter.)

March 21st.

YOUR father permits me to tell you that, if you comply with his expectations, all past disobligations shall be buried in oblivion. This is the last time this grace will be offered.

Patterns of the richest silks have been sent for. They are come. Your father will have me send them up to you. Your father intends you six suits at his own expense. Mr. Solmes intends to present you with a set of jewels, besides a fine allowance of pin-money. The draught of the settlements you may see whenever you will, there is more of them in your family's favour than was stipulated. If on

perusal you think any alteration necessary it shall be made. Do, my dear girl, *ask* for a perusal of them.

As a certain person's appearance at church lately and what he gives out make us extremely uneasy, you must not wonder that a short day is intended. This day fortnight we propose, but we shall not stand with you for a week or so. Come, be a good child as you used to be Clary. I have undertaken this once more for you. I expect you down, love. Your father expects you. I will clasp you to my fond heart. You don't know what I have suffered within these few weeks nor ever will be able to guess till you come to be in my situation, that of a fond indulgent mother praying night and day and struggling to preserve the peace of her family.

Your truly affectionate

MOTHER.

* * * *

I walked backwards and forwards. I threw down with disdain the patterns. I knew not what to do, and while in suspense Betty came in reminding me that my papa and mamma wanted me in the study.

"Tell my mamma," said I, "that I beg the favour of seeing her here for a moment."

I listened at the stairs head.

"You see, my dear, how it is," cried my father angrily. "You shall not see her alone."

"Tell her," said my mother to Betty, "she knows on what terms she may come to us."

At last Betty brought me these lines from my father:—

"Undutiful and perverse Clarissa,—No condescension I see will move you. Your mother will not see you nor will I. Your uncle Antony, your brother, sister, and your favourite, Mrs. Norton, shall see the ceremony privately performed in your uncle's chapel, and when Mr. Solmes can introduce you to us in the temper we wish, we may forgive his wife, though we never can our perverse daughter. So prepare to go to your uncle's next week. I will hear no plea, nor shall you hear from me till you have changed your name to my liking.

"YOUR INCENSED FATHER."

He, Solmes, came soon after I had received my father's letter.

He sent up to beg leave to see me.

"I am driven to despair," said I, "I cannot see him."

Down went Betty with my answer. Oh, how I heard my father storm! They are all in tumults. How it will end I know not. I am weary of my life. . . An angry dialogue with my sister, sent up to me on my refusal to see Mr. Solmes.

* * * *

I thought she would have beat me. . . When she could speak: "God give me patience with you!" she said.

"Amen!" said I.

* * * *

"You are, indeed, a very artful creature," she said in a passion, and then followed accusations, so low. "That I bewitched people with my insinuating address." "Did you not bewitch my grandfather?" Yet what did you say that we could not have said? And what was all this for? Why, truly, his last will and testament shewed what effect your obligingness had upon him, to leave the acquired parts of his estate from the next heirs to his youngest grandchild—a daughter! To leave the family pictures from his sons to you because you could wipe them with your dainty hands. The family plate too of two or three generations!

This was too low for me.

* * * *

We were heard, and Betty came up from my mother to command my sister to attend her. She went down accordingly.

March 21st.

What shall I do with this Lovelace? I have just now, by the unsuspected hole in the wall got a letter from him. So uneasy is he, for fear I should be prevailed upon in Solmes's favour. So full of threats. He has intelligence of all that is done in the family. Such protestations, such vows of reformation, such pressing arguments to escape from this disgraceful confinement. O my dear, what shall I do with this Lovelace?

Your C. H.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Wednesday, 12 o'clock.

My aunt Hervey has just gone from me; she came with my sister. I kissed her hand. She saluting me, said, "Why this distance with your aunt, my dear, who loves you so well?"

She owned she came to expostulate with me, for the peace sake of the family. My mother and she were both willing to impute my resolution to the manner I had been begun with and to my supposing my brother had more hand in Mr. Solmes's proposals than my father. In short fain would my aunt have furnished me with an excuse to come off my opposition, Bella the while humming a tune and opening this book and that, saying nothing.

It would be but repeating to give you the arguments that passed on both sides.

"I do not doubt," said my sister, "it is Miss Clary's aim, if she does not fly to her Lovelace, to get her estate into her hands, and live at the Grove, in that independence on which she builds all her perverseness. And, dear heart, how you will blaze away! Your Mamma Norton, your oracle, with your poor at your gates, reflecting by your ostentation on the ladies in the country, and the poor *without*, and Lovelace *within*, building up a name with one hand pulling it up with the other. O what a charming scheme! But your father's living will shall control your grandfather's dead one. In a word, it will be kept out of your hands till my father sees you are discreet enough to manage it or till you can dutifully by *law* tear it from him."

"Fie!" said my aunt, "this is not pretty."

"O, Madam," said I to my aunt, "let her go on. As to revoking my estate, what hinders if I please? I know my power but have not the least thought of exerting it. Be pleased to let my father know I would seek no relief that would be contrary to his will."

"For that matter, child were you to marry you must do as your husband will have you. If that husband be Mr. Lovelace he will be glad of an opportunity of embroiling the families. He is known to be a revengeful man."

"Mr. Lovelace's threatened vengeance is in return for threatened vengeance. It is not everybody will bear insult as I of late have been forced to bear it."

O how my sister's face shone with passion.

* * * *

My aunt, after a little hesitation said, "Consider, my dear, what confusion will be perpetuated in your family if you marry this hated Lovelace."

"And let it be considered what misery to me, madam, if I marry that hated Solmes!"

"I will go down. I will endeavour to persuade your father to let my sister come. A happier event may then result."

She went downstairs.

* * * *

My heart fluttered with the hope and fear of seeing my mother. But she was not permitted to come. My aunt was so good as to return, not without my sister.

She said it would break the heart of my father to have it imagined he had no power over his child. "Dearest, dearest miss," said she, clasping her fingers, "let me beg of you, for a hundred sakes to get over this aversion. I would kneel to you, my dearest niece—nay, I will kneel," and down she dropped, and I with her, clasping my arms about her and bathing her bosom with my tears.

"Cannot I live single? I cannot think of giving my vows to a man I cannot endure."

"Well then," rising—Bella with uplifted hands, "I see nothing can prevail on you to oblige me."

My aunt retired to the window, weeping, with my sister in her hand.

* * * *

My sister left my aunt, and took that opportunity to insult me. Stepping to my closet she took the patterns my mother had sent up and spread them on a chair beside me; offering one, then another, whispering, that my aunt might not hear her.

"This, Clary, is a pretty pattern. This is charming. I advise you to make your appearance in it. Won't you give orders to have the jewels set? Dear heart, how gorgeously you will be arrayed. Mamma Norton's sweet dear. Won't you have a velvet suit? It would cut a figure in a country church. Do you sigh? What, silent still? But about your laces, Clary?"

She would have gone on, had not my aunt advanced, weeping.

* * * *

"Let us go, madam," said my sister. "Let us leave the creature."

"Permit me, madam," said I to my aunt, sinking down, "to detain you one moment, to thank you for your goodness to me, and to forgive me for all I have said and done amiss in your presence. One word more," for she was going, "speak all you can for my dear Mrs. Norton, for she is low in the world; should ill-health overtake her, she may not know how to live without my mamma's favour, I shall have no means to help her for I will want necessaries before I resume my right."

"I am glad to hear you say this," said my aunt, "take this, and this, my charming niece," kissing me earnestly, and clasping her arms about my neck. "God protect and direct you!"

I must lay down my pen. I cannot say I am pleased with all I have written.

Your C. H.

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

March 22nd.

My cousin, Jenny Fynnet, is here; she is all prate, you know, and loves to set *me* a prating; yet comes upon a very grave occasion—to procure my mother to go to her grandmother Larkin, who is bed-ridden; and has taken it into her head that she is mortal and should make her will, but on condition that my mother who is her relation will go and advise as to the particulars of it for she has a high opinion of my mother's judgment in all notable affairs.

Mrs. Larkin lives seventeen miles off, and as my mother cannot endure to lie out of her own house she proposes to set out in the morning, and get back at night. So to-morrow I shall be at your service; nor will I be at home to anybody.

As to the impertinent Hickman, I have put him upon escorting the two ladies, in order to attend my mother home at night. Such expeditions as these, and to give us women a little air at public places, is all I know these dangling fellows are good for.

Here I was interrupted on the honest man's account. He has been here these two hours, and was now going. His horses at the door. My mother sent for me down, pretending to want to say something to me.

Something she said when I came that signified nothing—evidently for no reason called me but she wished to give me an opportunity to see what a fine bow her man could make. She knows I am not over-ready to oblige him with my company, if I happen to be otherwise engaged. I could not help showing a fretful air when I saw her intention.

She smiled off the visible fretfulness, that the man might go away in good humour with himself.

He bowed to the ground, and would have taken my hand, his whip in the other, but I would not have it, and withdrew my hand.

"A mad girl," said my mother.

He was quite put out, took his horse's bridle, bowing back till he ran against his servant. He mounted his horse—I mounted up-stairs, after a lecture.

Hickman is a sort of fiddling, busy, yet, to borrow a word from you, *unbusy* man, has a great deal to do, and seems to me to dispatch nothing. Irresolute and changeable in everything but in teasing me.

The man however is honest, has a good estate, and may one day be a baronet, an't so please you. He is humane, benevolent, and, people say, generous. I cannot but confess that now I like anybody better, whatever I did once.

He is no fox-hunter. He keeps a pack, indeed, but prefers not his hounds to his fellow-creatures. No bad sign for a wife I own. He loves his horse, but dislikes racing in a gaming way, as well as all sorts of gaming. Then he is sober, modest, they *say* virtuous—in short, has qualities that mothers would be fond of in a husband for their daughters, and for which perhaps their daughters would be the happier could they judge for themselves.

Strange that these sober fellows cannot have a decent sprightliness, a modest assurance with them. Something debonnaire, which need not be separated from their awe and reverence, when they address a woman. You and I have often retrospected the faces and minds of grown people, that is, have formed images, from their present appearances, as far as they would justify us, what sort of figures they made when boys and girls. And I'll tell you the lights in which Hickman, Solmes, and Lovelace, our three heroes, have appeared to me, supposing them boys at school.

Solmes I have imagined to be a little sordid rogue, who would purloin and beg every boy's bread and butter from him.

Hickman, an overgrown, lank-haired, chubby boy, who would be punched by everybody, and go home and tell his mother.

Lovelace, a curl-pated villain, full of fire, fancy, and mischief; an orchard robber, a wall climber, a horse rider without saddle or bridle—neck or nothing. A sturdy rogue, who would kick and cuff, and do no right, and take no wrong of anybody, would get his head broke, then a plaster for it, while he went on to do more mischief. And the same dispositions have grown up with them, and distinguish them as *men*.

As this letter is whimsical, I will not send it till I can

accompany it with something better suited to your unhappy circumstances. To-morrow will be wholly my own, and therefore yours.

Adieu till then,
A. H.

Tuesday morning, 7 o'clock.

My mother and cousin are already gone off in our chariot-and-four, attended by their doughty 'squire on horseback, and he by two of his own servants, and one of my mother's. They both love parade when they go abroad, at least in compliment to one another, which shows, that each thinks the other does.

I must now acquaint you that Mr. Hickman, when in London, found an opportunity to inquire after Mr. Lovelace's town life. At the "Cocoa Tree," in Pall Mall, he fell in with two of his intimates, Belton and Mowbray—both very free of speech. But the waiters paid them great respect, and on Mr. Hickman's inquiry after their characters, called them men of fortune and honour.

They began to talk of Mr. Lovelace of their own accord; and upon some gentlemen in the room asking, when they expected him in town, answered, that very day. Mr. Hickman, as they both went on praising Lovelace, said, he had indeed heard, that Mr. Lovelace was a very fine gentleman—and was proceeding, when one of them, interrupting him, said, "Only, sir, the finest gentleman in the world; that's all."

And so he led them on to expatiate more particularly on his qualities, which they were very fond of doing, but said not one single word in behalf of his morals—*Mind that* also, I say, in your uncle's style.

Mr. Hickman said, that Mr. Lovelace was very happy, as he understood, in the esteem of the ladies, and, smiling, to make them believe he did not think amiss of it, that he pushed his good fortune as far as it would go.

No doubt of it, replied one of them; and out came an oath, with a who would not? That he did as every young fellow would do.

Very true! said my mother's Puritan, but I hear he is in treaty with a fine lady—

So he was, Mr. Belton said—The devil fetch her, vile brute! for she engrossed all his time—but that the lady's family might dearly repent their usage of a man of his family and merit.

"Perhaps they may think him too wild," said Mr. Hickman; "their's is a very sober family."

"Sober!" said one. "A good honest word. Where the devil has it lain all this time? I have not heard it since I was at college, and then we bandied it about as obsolete."

These, my dear, are Mr. Lovelace's companions. Be pleased to take notice of that.

Mr. Hickman, upon the whole, professed to me that he had no reason to think well of Mr. Lovelace's morals, from what he heard of him in town. Yet his two intimates talked of his being *more regular* than he *used to be*: that he had made a good resolution, viz., that he would never give a challenge, nor refuse one, that, in short, he was a very brave fellow, and the most agreeable companion in the world, and would one day make a great figure in his county, since there was nothing he was not capable of.

I am afraid that this last assertion is too true. Is it not enough to determine such a mind as yours, if not already determined?

Yet it must be said too, that if there be a woman in the world that can reclaim him it is you. And if you *are* to be his,—but no more of that; he cannot, after all, deserve you.

Your affectionate,

A. H.

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

Thursday afternoon, March 23rd.

AN unexpected visitor has arrived, and caused me to change the subject I intended to pursue. It was your too-agreeable rake, Mr. Lovelace.

The end of his coming was to engage my interest with my *charming friend*; and as he was sure that I knew all your mind, to acquaint him what he had to trust to.

He gave me fresh instances of indignities cast upon himself by your uncles and brother; and declared that if you suffered yourself to be forced into the arms of the man for whose sake he was loaded with abuses, you should be one of the youngest, as well as one of the loveliest widows in England; and that he would moreover call your brother to account for the liberties he takes with his character to every one he meets with.

* * * *

He proposed several schemes for you. One that you

resume your estate, and if you find difficulties, that you will accept of Lady Betty Lawrance's or Lord M.'s assistance to reinstate you in it.

I told him he was mistaken if he thought he could intimidate you by menaces. "Miss Clarissa Harlowe," I said, "where she apprehends dangers to those she loves, is above fear."

He added: All the countries in the world were alike to him, so that whatever he should think it fit to do were you lost to him he should not apprehend the laws of *this*. I did not like his determined air. He is certainly capable of great rashness.

* * * *

We had a great deal of other discourse; but as the reciting of the rest would be but a repetition of many of the things that passed between you and him in the interview between you in the woodhouse, I refer myself to your memory.

Your most affectionate,

A. H.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Friday morning, 6 o'clock.

MRS. BETTY tells me, there is now nothing talked of but of my going to my uncle Antony's. She has been ordered, she says, to get ready to attend me thither.

* * * *

Going down to my poultry-yard, just now, I heard my brother and sister and that Solmes laughing and triumphing together. The high yew-hedge between us, which divides the yard from the garden, hindered them from seeing me.

* * * *

Eleven o'clock at night.

I HAVE been forced to try to compose my angry passions at my harpsichord; having first shut close my doors and windows, that I might not be heard below.

* * * *

Mr. Solmes is almost continually here. Something is working against me. What a state is suspense! when a naked sword seems hanging over one's head!

* * * *

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Tuesday morning.

These that follow are the contents of my uncle Harlowe's letter—brought me last night:—

Monday night.

MISS CLARY,

SINCE you have grown so bold a challenger, and teach us all our duty, though you will not practise your own, I must tell you nobody wants your estate from you. Your letter to Mr. Solmes is inexcusable. Your parents *will* be obeyed. Your mother has nevertheless prevailed to have your going to your uncle Antony's put off till Thursday, yet owns you deserve not that or any other favour from her. You are an ungrateful unreasonable child. Must you have your will paramount to everybody's? How are you altered?

Your displeased uncle,

JOHN HARLOWE.

To be carried away on Thursday—to the moated house—to the chapel—to Solmes! How can I think of this? They will make me desperate.

Tuesday morning, 8 o'clock.

I HAVE a letter from Mr. Lovelace. I opened it with the expectation of its being filled with bold and free complaints on my not writing to prevent his two nights watching; but, instead of complaints, he is "full of tender concern lest I may have been prevented by indisposition, or by the close confinement which he has frequently cautioned me I may expect."

He says, "He has been in different disguises loitering about our garden and park-wall, all the day on Sunday last; and all Sunday night was wandering about the coppice, and near the back door. It rained, and he has got a great cold, attended with feverishness, and so hoarse that he has almost lost his voice."

Why did he not flame out in his letter? Treated as I am by my friends it is dangerous to be laid under the sense of an obligation to a suitor's patience, and especially when such a one suffers in health for my sake.

"He had no shelter," he says, "but under the overgrown ivy which spreads wildly round the heads of two or three oaklings, and that was soon wet through."

You remember the spot. You and I, my dear, once thought ourselves obliged to the natural shade which those ivy-covered oaklings afforded us in a sultry day.

I can't help saying I am sorry he has suffered for my sake.

His letter is dated last night at eight. "And indisposed as he is," he tells me, "that he will watch till ten in hopes of my giving him the meeting he so earnestly requests. And after that he has a mile to walk to his horse and servant; and four miles then to ride to his inn."

He owns "That he has an intelligencer in our family, who has failed him for a day or two past, and, not knowing how I may be treated, his anxiety is increased."

This circumstance gives me to guess who this intelligencer is—Joseph Leman—a creature confided in by my brother. This is not an honourable way of proceeding. . . . He presses for an interview. He will give me reasons for my permitting him to wait on my father. Lord M. will accompany him if I please, or his aunt, Lady Betty Lawrance. Such terms shall be offered as will have weight with them.

* * * *

I can but say I am sorry the man is not well.

* * * *

I am afraid to ask you, my dear, what you would have done, thus situated. But what I *have* done, I *have* done. In a word I wrote, "That I would, if possible, give him a meeting to-morrow night between the hours of nine and twelve by the ivy summer-house or in it or near the great cascade at the bottom of the garden, and would unbolt the door that he might come in by his own key. But that, if I found the meeting impracticable, or should change my mind I would signify as much by another line, which he must wait for until dark."

Tuesday, 11 o'clock.

I AM just returned from depositing my billet. How diligent is this man! It is plain he was in waiting, for I had walked but a few paces after I had deposited it when, my heart misgiving me I returned, to have taken it back, in order to reconsider it as I walked, and whether I should, or should not, let it go. But I found it gone.

In all probability there was but a brick wall of a few inches thick between Mr. Lovelace and me, at the very time I put the letter under the brick!

I am come back dissatisfied with myself. But I think, my dear, there can be no harm in meeting him. If I do not, he may take some violent measures.

* * * *

Betty confirms the intimation that I must go to my uncle's on Thursday. She was sent on purpose to direct me to prepare myself for going and to help me to get everything up in order for my removal.

I wrote a few lines to my uncle Harlowe who was not gone, to get a reprieve from being carried away so soon as Thursday next. My heart misgives me as to meeting him. The copy I enclose.

Tuesday.

Honoured Sir,

LET me this time be heard with patience, and have my petition granted. That I may not be hurried away next Thursday.

Why should a poor girl be turned out of doors so disgracefully? Procure for me, sir, one fortnight's respite. In that space I hope you will all relent. My mamma shall not need to shut her door in apprehension of seeing her disgraced child. I will not presume to think of entering her presence, or my papa's, without leave. One fortnight's respite is but a *small favour*. Procure it for me, therefore, dear sir, and you will exceedingly oblige

Your greatly afflicted,

CL. HARLOWE.

Here is his answer:—

YOUR going to your uncle's was absolutely concluded upon for next Thursday. Nevertheless, your mother, seconded by Mr. Solmes, pleaded so strongly to have you indulged that your request will be complied with upon one condition.

That you admit of a visit from Mr. Solmes for one hour, in company of your brother, your sister, or your uncle Antony.

Name your day and hour. Mr. Solmes will neither eat you nor drink you.

JOHN HARLOWE.

After a little deliberation I resolved to comply with this condition. All I fear is that Mr. Lovelace's intelligencer

may inform him of it; and that his apprehensions upon it may make him take some desperate resolution. I think to write to him to suspend the interview he is possibly so sure of.

Repenting of my appointment with Mr. Lovelace before I had this favour granted me, I hesitated not to revoke it now that I had gained a respite. Accordingly I wrote "that I found it inconvenient to meet him, that the mischief that might flow from a discovery could not be justified by any end, that I found one servant more in my way, that things drawing to a crisis between my friends and me an interview could avail nothing, and—that he might be assured I would sooner choose death than Mr. Solmes."

Tuesday night.

I have deposited my letter to Mr. Lovelace.

Wednesday, 9 o'clock.

I am just returned from my morning walk, and have received an answer from Mr. Lovelace. He must have had pen, ink, and paper with him. It was written in the cop-pice. I enclose it.

(To Miss Clarissa Harlowe.)

Good God!

WHAT is now to become of me!—How shall I support this disappointment!—On one knee I write!—My feet benumbed with midnight wanderings through the heaviest dews that ever fell: my wig and linen dripping with the hoar-frost!—Day but just breaking—may it never rise again!—Unless it bring healing and comfort to a benighted soul!

O my beloved! I know not what I write!—Curse upon the caution that is pleaded to deprive me of an expectation so transporting!

*

*

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*

Yet I must insist upon your promise. . . The first you ever made me. . . Life and death perhaps depending on it.

. . . My *fate* is indeed at a crisis. . . Forgive me. . . I have written in too much anguish! . . . All nature partakes of my gloom. . . But if, exerting your usual generosity, you will excuse and *re-appoint*, may that God, whom you

profess to serve, and who is the God of Truth and of Promises, protect and bless you for both, and for restoring to himself, and to hope,

Your ever-adoring, but desponding
Ivy-Cavern, in the Coppice. LOVELACE!

Day breaking.

This answer I shall return.

Wednesday morning.

I AM amazed, sir, at the freedom of your reproaches. Pressed and teased to give you a private meeting am *I* to be thus upbraided because I thought it prudent to change my mind?—A liberty I had reserved to myself, when I made the *appointment*, as you call it. I needed not instances of your impatient spirit. I am too much alarmed not to wish and desire, that your letter of this day may conclude all the trouble you had from or for

Your humble servant,
CL. HARLOWE.

In this respite till Tuesday I have a little time to look about me. Mr. Lovelace's insolence will make me go very home with myself. Not that I can conquer my aversion to Mr. Solmes. But, if I break with Mr. Lovelace, who knows but my friends will restore their favour, and let their views in relation to the other go off? Or, at least, that I may be safe till my cousin Morden* arrives.

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

Thursday.

YOUR resolution is right if you can avoid being Solmes's wife. You have done all you ought to do, and I freely own that your family's usage of you, and Lovelace's different treatment, would have made me his past redemption. I wonder not at your appointment with him.

I shall be all impatience to know how this matter ends between you and him. But a *few inches of brickwall* between you so lately, and now such *mountains*! And you think to hold it? May be so.

I urge you by all means to send out of reach of your family all the letters and papers you would not have them

* Colonel Morden, with whom Clarissa had been a favourite in her childhood.

see. Methinks I would wish you to deposit likewise a parcel of clothes, linen, and the like, before your interview with Solmes, lest you should not have an opportunity for it afterwards. Robin shall fetch it away on the first orders, by day or night.

I am in hopes to procure from my mother if things come to any extremity, leave for you to be privately with us. This alternative has been a good while in my head.

Your A. H.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Friday morning, 11 o'clock.

I HAVE already made up my parcel of linen. My heart ached all the time I was employed about it and still aches at the thought of its being a necessary precaution. . . . Folded up separately are Mr. Lovelace's letters to me since he was forbidden this house, and copies of my answers. I expect you will break the seals, and when you have perused them give me your opinion.

By the way, not a line from that man!—not *one* line! Wednesday I deposited mine. It remained there on Wednesday night. What time it was taken away yesterday I cannot tell for I did not concern myself about it till towards night and then it was not there. No return at ten this day.

Friday, 1 o'clock, in the Woodhouse.

No letter yet from this man! I have luckily deposited my parcel, and have your letter of last night. If Robert take this without the parcel, pray let him return immediately for it. But he cannot miss it, I think—and must conclude that it is put there for him to take away. You may believe, from the contents of yours, that I shall immediately write again.

C. H.

(Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.)

Thursday, March 30th.

OF your abominable wretch's behaviour and baseness at the paltry alehouse, which he calls an inn, prepare to hear.

Wrens and sparrows are not too ignoble a quarry for this villanous goss-hawk. His assiduities, his watchings, his nightly risks, the inclement weather he journeys in, must not be all placed to *your* account. He has opportunities of

making everything light to him of that sort. A sweet, pretty girl, I am told. Innocent till he went thither. Now (Ah! poor girl!) who knows what?

But just turned of seventeen! His friend and brother rake (a man of humour and intrigue), as I am told, to share the social bottle with. And sometimes another disguised rake or two. No sorrow comes near their hearts. Be not disturbed, my dear, at his *hoarsenesses*! His pretty Betsy, his Rosebud, as the vile wretch calls her, can *hear* all he says.

He is very fond of her. They say she is innocent even yet. Her father, her grandmother, believe her to be so. He is to fortune her out to a young lover! Ah! the poor young lover! Ah! the poor simple girl! He appears to the people as a military man in disguise, secreting himself on account of a duel, the adversary's life in suspense. O my dear, how pleasantly can these devils, as I must call them, pass their time, while our gentle bosoms heave with pity for their supposed sufferings.

A. H.

(Clarissa, in reply.)

You incense and terrify me. Hasten to me what further intelligence you can get of this vilest of men. Warn, if not too late, the unthinking father. I think I hate him worse than Solmes.

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

March 31.

JUSTICE obliges me to forward this after my last on the wings of the wind. I am almost afraid for your heart when I tell you that I have found out, now I have got to the bottom of this inquiry, something noble in Lovelace.

I have seen the girl; she is very pretty and innocent. She is to be married next week, and this promoted and brought about by him. He is resolved, her father says, to make one couple happy, and wishes he could make more so [*There's for you, my dear!*] And having taken a liking also to the young fellow whom she professes to love, he has given her a hundred pounds. The grandmother actually has it in her hands.

Mr. Lovelace and his friend, the poor man says, when they first came to his house, affected to appear as persons of low degree; but now he knows the one (but mentioned it in confidence) to be Colonel Barrow, the other Captain Sloane.

The Colonel, he owns, was at first very sweet upon his girl. But upon her grandmother's begging of him to spare her innocence, he vowed that he never would offer anything but good counsel to her. He kept his word, and the pretty fool acknowledged that she never could have been better instructed by the minister himself from the Bible-book. The girl pleased me so well that I made her visit to me worth her while.

But what, my dear, will become of us now?—Lovelace not only reformed but turned preacher! Upon the whole, Mr. Lovelace comes out with so much advantage from this inquiry, that were there the least room for it, I should suspect the whole to be *a plot set on foot to wash a blackamoor white.*

Adieu, my dear,

ANNA HOWE.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Saturday.

HASTY censurers do indeed subject themselves to the charge of inconsistency, and so indeed they ought, for if you, my dear, were so loth to own a mistake, I believe I should not have loved you so well as I really do.

Mr. Lovelace has faults enough to deserve very severe censure although he be not guilty of this, and I must needs own that as I should for ever have deserved this, had he been capable of such a vile intrigue in his way to Harlowe Place, it has indeed proportionately engaged my generosity, as you call it, in his favour, perhaps more than I may have had reason to wish!

* * * *

It is lucky enough that this matter was cleared up to me by your friendly diligence so soon, for had I written before it was, it would have been to reinforce my dismissal of him, and I should have mentioned the very motive, for it affected me more than I think it ought. And then, what an advantage would that have given him when he could have cleared up the matter so happily for himself.

Adieu, my thrice happy Miss Howe, who have no hard terms affixed to your duty!

Yours,

C. H.

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

Sunday, April 2nd.

I OUGHT yesterday to have acknowledged the receipt of your parcel. Robin tells me that the Joseph Leman whom you mention as the traitor, saw him. He was in the poultry-yard, and spoke to Robin over the bank which divides that from the green lane. "What brings you hither, Mr. Robert? But I can tell. Hie away as fast as you can."

* * * * *

I shall not open any of your sealed parcels but in your presence. By the extracts you have given me from his letters and your own, I know all that relates to the situation of things between you.

Heaven direct you.

Your own

A. H.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

I AM glad my papers are safe in your hands. I had another letter from Mr. Lovelace. He says that the airs Solmes gives himself on the occasion add to his concern. Solmes has actually talked with tradesmen of equipages. The horrid wretch!

* * * * *

I have deposited a letter for Mr. Lovelace, charging him to avoid any rash step, and reassuring him I will not be Solmes's wife.

(Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.)

Tuesday morning, 6 o'clock.

THE day is come! I wish it were happily over. I have had a wretched night. Hardly a wink have I slept, ruminating upon the approaching interview. The very distance of time to which they consented, has added solemnity to the meeting, which otherwise it would not have had.

A thoughtful mind is not a blessing to be coveted, unless it has such a happy vivacity with it as yours,—a vivacity which enables a person to enjoy the *present*, without being over-anxious about the *future*.

Tuesday.

I HAVE had a visit from my aunt Hervey. . . . She represented how unhappy it would be if I did not suffer

myself to be prevailed upon, and pressed me to receive Mr. Solmes. . . . I never found myself so fretful in my life.

"I am sorry, madam," I said, "it should be thought arrogance in me to suppose I am not thought worthy of a better man."

She told me it signified nothing to talk; I knew the expectation of every one. She could assure me it would be worse for me if I *now receded* than if I had never *advanced*.

"Advanced! Is this a trick upon me? My dearest aunt, will not my mother be present at this dreaded interview? How can they look upon this interview as an *advance*?"

She was displeased. "O Miss, you seem to be a determined young creature."

And down she hurried.

Adieu, my only friend,

C. H.

(To Miss Howe.)

Continued through the night.

WELL, my dear, I am alive, and here! but for how long I cannot say. I must tell you how the saucy Betty discomposed me when she came up with a message saying I must be pleased to walk down to my own parlour. "There is everybody, I will assure you, in full *congregation*. And there is Mr. Solmes as fine as a lord, with a charming white peruke, fine laced shirt and ruffles, coat trimmed with silver, and a waistcoat standing on end with lace. Quite handsome, believe me! There is my young lady and my young master, and Mr. Solmes with the air of a great courtier standing up because he named you. 'Miss Betty,' said he" (then the ape of a wench bowed and scraped, as awkwardly, I suppose, as he did), "'pray give my humble service to Miss Clarissa, and tell her I await her commands.'"

Was not this a wicked wench? I trembled so I could scarcely stand.

"Say I can't go," I cried; "but yet when 'tis over, 'tis over! Say I'll wait upon—I'll attend—I'll come presently—say anything, I care not what. But give me my fan, and fetch me a glass of water."

She went, and I fanned myself all the time; for I was in a flame, and hemmed, and struggled with myself all I could, and, when she returned, drank the water, and finding no hope presently of a quieter heart, I sent her down, and followed

her with precipitation, trembling so that, had I not hurried, I question if I could have gone down at all. O my dear, what a poor, passive machine is the body when the mind is disordered!

There are two doors to *my* parlour, as I used to call it. As I entered at one, my friends hurried out at the other. I just saw the gown of my sister, the last who slid away. And they all remained in the next parlour, a wainscot partition only parting the two. I remember them both in one; but they were separated in favour of us girls, for each to receive her visitors in at her pleasure.

Mr. Solmes approached me as soon as I entered, cringing to the ground, a visible confusion in every feature of his face. After half a dozen choked-up Madams—he was very sorry—he was very much concerned—it was his misfortune—and there he stopped, being unable presently to complete a sentence.

This gave me a little more presence of mind.

I turned from him, and seated myself in one of the fireside chairs, fanning myself, and have since recollected that I must have looked very saucily.

He hemmed five or six times, and these produced a sentence. “That I could not but see his confusion. For it was his awe, his reverence for so superlative a lady” (I assure you!) “And he hoped”—three times he hoped, before he told me what; at last it came out—“that I was too generous to despise him for such—for such—*true* tokens of his love.”

“I do indeed see you under some confusion, sir; and this gives me hope that, although I have been compelled to give way to this interview, it may be attended with happier effects than I had apprehended from it.”

He had hemmed himself into more courage.

“You could not, madam, imagine any creature so blind to your merits, and so little attracted by them, as easily to forego the approbation he was honoured with by your worthy family, while he had any hope given him that one day he might, by his perseverance and zeal, expect your favour.”

* * * *

He paused, and seemed a little at a loss; and I was going to give him still stronger instances of my plain dealing, when in came my uncle Antony.

“So, niece, sitting in state like a queen giving audience.”

I approached him with a bent knee.

“Let me, sir, bespeak your favour and compassion.”

"You will have the favour of everybody, niece, when you know how to deserve it."

"I will engage never to marry any one without my father's consent. Here I will take the solemnest oath that can be offered me."

"That is the matrimonial one," interrupted he, with a big voice. "The more you oppose it the worse it will be for you."

This before the man highly provoked me.

"Then, sir, you shall soon follow me to the grave."

My uncle was in a terrible rage.

I was going out at the door I came in at, the gentlemen looking at one another, when who should I meet but my brother, who had heard all that had passed.

He bolted upon me so unexpectedly, that I was surprised. He took my hand and grasped it with violence. "O thou fallen angel," said he, peering up to my downcast face, "such a sweetness *here!* and such an obstinacy *there!*"—tapping my neck. "O thou true woman, though so young. But you shall not have your Rake, remember that,"—in a loud whisper. "You shall be redeemed from ruin, and hereafter you will bless this worthy gentleman for his *condescension*"—that was the brutal brother's word.

He had led me up to meet Mr. Solmes, whose hand he took, as he held mine. "Here, sir," said he, "take the rebel daughter's hand; she shall confirm the gift in a week's time, or will have neither father, mother, nor brother to boast of."

I snatched my hand away.

"How now, miss!"

"And how now, sir! What right have *you* to dispose of my hand? If you govern everybody else, you shall not govern me—especially in a point so immediately relative to myself, and in which you neither have, nor ever shall have, anything to do."

I would have broken from him, but he held my hand too fast.

"Let me go, sir!—Why am I thus treated?—You *design*, I doubt not, with your unmanly gripings, to hurt me, as you do. But again I ask, wherefore is it that I am to be thus treated by *you*?"

He tossed my hand from him with a whirl, that pained my very shoulder. I wept, and held my other hand to the part.

He had no patience, he said, with such a perverse one. It was one of my arts to pretend to be pained.

Mr. Solmes said he would sooner give up all his hopes of me, than that I should be used unkindly. And he offered to plead in my behalf; and applied himself with a bow, as if for my approbation of his interposition.

"Interpose not, Mr. Solmes," said I, "to save me from my brother's violence. I cannot wish to owe an obligation to a man whose ungenerous perseverance is the occasion of *that* violence, and of all my disgraceful sufferings."

* * * *

"And you, sir," turning to my brother, "if you think that meekness always indicates tameness, and that there is no magnanimity without bluster, own yourself mistaken for once; for you shall have reason to judge from henceforth that a generous mind is not to be forced; and that——"

"No more," said the imperious wretch, "I charge you," lifting up his hands and eyes.

* * * *

They were then silent, and seemed by their looks to want to talk to one another, walking about (in violent disorder too) between whiles. I sat down fanning myself (as it happened, against the glass), and I could perceive my colour go and come; and being sick to the very heart, and apprehensive of fainting, I rung.

Betty came in. I called for a glass of water, and drank it. But nobody minded me. I heard my brother pronounce the words, "Art! Female art!" to Solmes. Still, I could see the man was affected, and, fearing I should faint, I arose, and taking hold of Betty's arm, "Let me hold by you, Betty," said I; and moved with trembling feet towards the door, and then turned about, and made a courtesy to my uncle, who had just come in. "Permit me, sir," said I, "to withdraw.—You will go with me, Betty?"

And so, without any further prohibition, I retired into the garden; and there, casting myself upon the first seat, and throwing Betty's apron over my face, leaning against her side, my hands between hers, I gave way to a violent burst of grief, or passion, or both; which, as it seemed, saved my heart from breaking, for I was sensible of an immediate relief.

I have already given you specimens of *Mrs.* Betty's impertinence. The wench, notwithstanding my distress, took great liberties of speech with me, after she saw me a little recovered, insomuch that I was obliged to silence her

by prohibition of saying another word to me; and then she dropped behind me sullen and gloomy.

It was near an hour before I was sent for in again. The messenger was my cousin Dolly Hervey, who, with an eye of compassion and respect (for Miss Hervey always loved me, and calls herself my scholar, as you know), told me my company was desired.

Betty left us.

"Who commands my attendance, cousin?" said I. "Have you not been in tears, my dear?"

"Who can forbear tears?" said she.

"Why, what is the matter, cousin Dolly? Sure, nobody is entitled to weep in this family but *me*!"

"Yes, *I* am, madam," said she, "because I love you. You must take no notice of what I tell you," said the dear girl; "but my mamma has been weeping for you too, with me; but durst not let anybody see it. 'O Dolly,' said my mamma, 'there never was so set a malice in man as in your cousin James Harlowe. They will ruin the flower and ornament of their family.'"

By this time we had entered the house. Dolly accompanied me into the parlour, and left me.

Nobody was there. I sat down, and had leisure to weep; reflecting upon what my cousin Dolly had told me.

They were all in my sister's parlour adjoining; for I heard a confused mixture of voices, some louder than others, which drowned the more compassionating accents.

What passed among them I know not; but my brother came in by the time I had tolerably recovered myself, with a settled and haughty gloom upon his brow. "Your father and mother command you instantly to prepare for your uncle Antony's. You need not be solicitous about what you shall take with you. You may give Betty your keys.

"Take them, Betty, if the perverse one has them about her, and carry them to her mother. She will take care to send everything after you that you shall want; but another night you will not be permitted to stay in this house."

"I don't choose to give my keys to anybody, except to my mother, and into her own hands. You see how much I am disordered. It may cost me my life to be hurried away so suddenly. I beg to be indulged till next Monday at least."

"That will not be granted you. So prepare for this very night; and give up your keys. Give them to *me*, miss. I'll carry them to your mother."

"Excuse me, brother. Indeed I won't.

"Indeed you must! Have you anything you are afraid should be seen by your mother?"

"Not if I be permitted to attend her."

"I'll make a report accordingly."

He went out.

In came Miss Dolly Hervey. "I am sorry, cousin, to be the messenger, but your mamma insists upon your sending up all the keys of your cabinet, library, and drawers."

"Tell my mother, that I yield them up to her commands. Tell her I make no conditions with my mother. But if she find nothing she shall disapprove of, I beg that she will permit me to tarry here a few days longer.—Try, my Dolly"—the dear girl sobbing with grief—"try if your gentleness cannot prevail for me."

* * * *

But being a little heavy (for it is now past two in the morning), I will lie down in my clothes, to indulge the kind summons, if it will be granted.

CL. HARLOWE.

(Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.)

Wednesday, 11 o'clock, April 5th.

I MUST write as I have opportunity, making use of my concealed stores, for my pens and ink—at least all of each that they could find—are taken from me, as I shall tell you more particularly by-and-by.

About an hour ago I deposited my letter to you, as also a billet to Mr. Lovelace, lest his impatience should put him upon some rashness, signifying, in four lines, "That the interview was over; and that I hoped my steady refusal of Mr. Solmes would discourage any further applications to me in his favour."

* * * *

In less than a quarter of an hour, up came Betty. I let her in upon her tapping, and asking, half out of breath too, for admittance.

"The Lord have mercy upon us!" said she. "What a confusion of a house is this!" hurrying up and down, fanning herself with her handkerchief. "Such angry masters and mistresses!—such an obstinate young lady!—such an humble lover;—such enraged uncles!—such—O dear!—dear! What a topsy-turvy house!"

Thus she ran on; while I sat as patiently as I could.

At last, turning to me, "I must do as I am bid. I can't help it. Don't be angry with me, miss. But I must carry down your pen and ink this moment."

"By whose order?"

"By your papa's and mamma's."

"How shall I know that?"

She offered to go to my closet. I stepped in before her:—

"Touch it, if you dare!"

Up came my cousin Dolly.

"Dear cousin Clarissa," said the good-natured creature, sobbing, "you must—indeed you must—deliver to Betty or to me—your pen and ink."

"Must I, sweet cousin? Then I will to you." And I gave my standish to her.

"I am sorry," said Dolly, "to be the messenger, but your papa will not have you in the same house with him. He is resolved you shall be carried away on Saturday at farthest. And therefore your pen and ink are taken away that you may give nobody notice of it."

And away went the dear girl, very sorrowful, carrying down with her my standish, and all its furniture. As it happened, I had hid half a dozen crowquills in as many different places.

C. H.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

I must keep nothing by me now; and when I write lock myself in, that I may not be surprised now they think I have no pen and ink.

I found another letter from this diligent man, and by its contents a confirmation that nothing passes in this house but he knows it as soon as it passes. For this letter must have been written before he could have received mine.

He assures me they are more and more determined to subdue me.

He sends me the compliments of his family, and acquaints me with their earnest desire to see me amongst them. Vehemently does he press for my quitting this house while it is in my power to get away, and again craves leave to order his uncle's chariot-and-six to attend my commands at the stile leading to the coppice adjoining to the paddock.

Settlements he again offers. Lord M. and Lady Sarah and Lady Betty to be guarantees of his honour. But if I choose not to go to either of those ladies, nor yet to make him the happiest of men so soon as it is his hope, he urges

me to withdraw to my own house, and to accept of my Lord M. for my guardian and protector till my cousin Morden arrives. He can contrive, he says, to give me possession of it, and will fill it with his female relations on the first invitation from me, and Mrs. Norton, or Miss Howe, may be prevailed upon to be with me for a time. There can be no pretence for litigation when I am once in it. Nor will he visit me, and I shall have unexceptionable proofs of his own good behaviour.

As to the disgrace a person of my character may be apprehensive of on quitting my father's house, he observes too truly I doubt, that the treatment I meet with is in everybody's mouth, that all the disgrace I can receive they have given me. He says he will oppose my being carried away to my uncle's. He tells me my brother and sister and Mr. Solmes design to be there to meet me; that my father and mother will not come till the ceremony is over, and then to try to reconcile me to my odious husband.

How, my dear, am I driven! . He owns he has taken measures on this intelligence, but is desirous to avoid extremities.

* * * *

He begs a few lines from me. Something I *must* resolve upon, or it will be out of my power to help myself.

I cannot bear the thought of throwing myself upon the protection of his friends.

Dearest creature, advise your distressed friend.

* * * *

I had to break off here, I was so excessively uneasy, and went down to the garden to try to calm my mind, by shifting the scene. I took but one turn, when Betty came to me. "Here, miss, is your papa—your uncle Antony too—and my young master and my young mistress, all coming to take a walk in the garden; and your papa sends me to see where you are, for fear he should meet you."

I struck into a path, and got behind the yew hedge, and concealed myself till they were gone past me.

My mother, it seems, is not well. Should she be worse, I should have additional unhappiness.

You cannot imagine what my emotions were on seeing my father so near me. I was glad to look at him as he passed, but I trembled in every joint, when I heard him utter these words:—

"Son James, to you and Bella, and to you, brother, do I commit this matter."

That I was meant, I cannot doubt. And yet, why was I so affected ; since I may be said to have been given up to the cruelty of my brother and sister for many days past ?

* * * *

All is in a hurry below-stairs ; Betty in and out like a spy. I am a good deal disordered in body as well as mind. Indeed I am quite heartsick.

I will go down for a little air.

I know not what to do ! All is so strangely busy !—doors clapped to ; going out of one apartment, hurryingly, as I may say, into another ; Betty, in her alarming way, staring as if scared.

Here again comes the creature, with her deep-drawn affected sighs, and her “ O dear’s ! O dear’s ! ”

(Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.)

Thursday night.

THE alarming hurry I mentioned last night, and Betty’s saucy hints, are owing to private intimation Mr. Lovelace contrived our family should have of his insolent resolution to prevent my being carried to my uncle’s.

Having shaken off the impertinent Betty, I wrote to Mr. Lovelace to let him know that all that was intended at my uncle Antony’s was to be carried out here ; that I had resolved to throw myself on the protection of either of his aunts who would afford it, and that I would, if possible, meet him without the garden door at three or four on Monday afternoon.

That in the mean time he should acquaint me “ whether I might hope for either of those ladies’ protection.” I added, that if he could prevail upon one of the Misses Montague to *favour me with her company on the road*, it would make me more easy in the thoughts of carrying into effect a resolution which I had come to with reluctance, and which would throw such a slur upon my reputation in the eye of the world, as perhaps I should never be able to wipe off.

Down into the garden I slid with this in the dark, which at another time I should not have had the courage to do, and came up unknown to anybody.

My mind dreadfully misgave me when I returned.

* * * *

I have a good mind to slide down once more, in order to take back my letter. Our doors are always locked and

barred up at eleven ; but the seats of the lesser hall windows being almost even with the ground without, and the shutters not difficult to open, I could easily get out.

Why should I be so uneasy ? He owns he spends three parts of his days in loitering about in disguise, besides the attendance given by his servant when he himself is not *in waiting*, as he calls it.

C. H.

Eight o'clock.

THE man, my dear, has got the letter. What a strange diligence ! I wish he means well, that he takes so much pains. Yet, to be ingenuous, I must own that I should be displeased if he took less. I wish, however, he had been a hundred miles off. What an advantage have I given him over me.

Now the letter is out of my power I have more uneasiness, for till now I had a doubt whether it should go. And yet is there any other way to do if I would avoid Solmes ? What a giddy creature shall I be thought if I pursue the course to which this letter must lead me !

My dearest friend, tell me (but yet do not tell me) if I have done wrong.

Your affectionate

C. H.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Friday, 1 o'clock.

I HAVE a letter from Mr. Lovelace full of transports, vows, and promises. You'll see how he engages in it for Lady Betty's protection and Miss Charlotte Montague's accompanying me. I have nothing to do, he says, but to prepare to receive the congratulations of his whole family.

How he presumes upon my being his.

The chariot-and-six is to be ready at the place he mentions. You'll see as to the slur upon my reputation, about which I am so apprehensive, how boldly he argues. Generously enough, indeed, were I to be his, and had given him to believe that I would. But that I have not done.

I must be Solmes's wife if I stay here.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

April 8th.

WHETHER you will blame me or not I cannot tell. I have deposited a letter to Mr. Lovelace confirming my resolution to leave this house on Monday next. I tell him I shall not

bring any clothes than those I have on, lest I be suspected. That I must expect to be denied possession of my estate ; that it will be best to go to a private lodging near Lady Betty Lawrance's, that it may not appear to the world I have *refused myself with his family*, that he shall instantly leave me nor come near me but by my leave and that if I find myself in danger of being discovered and carried back by violence, I will throw myself into the protection of Lady Betty or Lady Sarah.

O, my dear, what a sad thing is the necessity forced upon me for all this contrivance !

Saturday.

MR. SOLMES is here. He is to dine with his new relations, as Betty tells me he already calls them.

He would have thrown himself in my way once more, but I hurried up to my prison in my return from my garden walk, to avoid him.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Saturday.

ALREADY I have an ecstatic answer. He promises compliance with my will in everything.

He says that I need not be under any solicitude as to apparel, all immediate occasions of that sort will be cheerfully supplied by the ladies of his family.

He is afraid that the time will hardly allow of his procuring Miss Charlotte Montague's attendance upon me at St. Alban's, as he had proposed, because he understands she keeps her chamber with a violent cold. But both she and her sister, the first moment she is able to go abroad, shall visit me at my private lodgings and introduce me to Lady Sarah and Lady Betty, and accompany me to town if I please, and stay as long in it with me as I shall think fit to stay there.

Lord M. will also, at my own time, make me a visit, and for his own part, when he has seen me in safety in their protection he will leave me and not attempt to visit me but by my own permission.

He had thoughts once, he says, on hearing of his cousin Charlotte's indisposition, to have engaged his cousin Patty's attendance upon me at St. Alban's, but he says she is a low-spirited, timorous girl, and would but the more have perplexed us.

So, my dear, the enterprise requires courage and high spirits, you see—and indeed it does. What am I about to do?

He himself, it is plain, thinks it necessary that I should be accompanied with one of my own sex. He might at least have proposed the woman of one of the ladies of his family. Lord bless me, what am I about to do?

* * * *

What to do I know not. The more I think the more I am embarrassed.

Sunday, 4 in the afternoon.

My letter is not yet taken away; if he should not send for it or take it, and come hither on my not meeting him to-morrow, in doubt of what may have befallen me, what shall I do? Why had I any concerns with this sex? I, that was so happy till I knew this man!

I dined in the Ivy Summer-house. My request to do so was complied with at the first word. To show I meant nothing, I went again into the house with Betty as soon as I had dined. I thought it was not amiss to ask this liberty, the weather seeming to be set in fine. Who knows what Tuesday or Wednesday may produce?

Sunday evening, 7 o'clock.

THERE remains my letter still. He is busied, I suppose, in his preparations for to-morrow. But then he has servants. Does the man think he is so secure of me that, having appointed, he need not give himself any further concern about me till the very moment?

Monday morning.

O MY dear, there lies the letter. Does he think he is so sure of me?

Nine o'clock.

MY cousin Dolly Hervey slid the enclosed letter into my hand as I passed by her coming out of the garden:—

“DEAREST MADAM,

“I have got intelligence from one who pretends to know everything, that you must be married on Wednesday morning to Mr. Solmes. Perhaps, however, she says this only to vex me, for it is that saucy creature, Betty Barnes.

"A licence is got.

"Then they have a notion, from that false Betty, I believe, that you intend to take something to make yourself ill, and so they will search for phials and powders and such-like.

"Yet, sick or well, alas! my dear cousin, you must be married.

"They are sure you will make a good wife, and Mr. Solmes is always telling them how he will purchase your love by rich presents. A sycophant! I wish he and Betty Barnes were to come together, and that he would beat her.

"After what I have told you, I need not advise you to secure everything you would not have seen.

"Let me beg that you will burn this letter, and pray do not take anything that may prejudice your health, for that will not do.

"I am your truly loving cousin,

"D. H."

Ivy Summer-house, 2 o'clock.

HE has not yet got my letter. While I was contriving to send my gaoleress away, my aunt came in.

[The interview with her aunt is but a repetition in substance of the others.]

Here comes Betty with my dinner.

* * * *

The wench is gone. The time of meeting is at hand. O that he may not come.

But he is at the garden door.

* * * *

I was mistaken!—How many noises *unlike*, be made *like* to what one fears!—Why flutters the fool so?

* * * *

I will hasten to deposit this. Then I will, for the last time, go to the usual place, in hopes to find that he has got my letter. If he has, I will not meet him. If he has *not*, I will take it back and show him what I have written. The interview must be as short as possible, for should it be discovered, it would furnish a new and strong pretence for the intended evil of Wednesday next.

Perhaps I shall not be able to write again one while. Perhaps not till I am the miserable property of that Solmes!—But that shall never, never be.

If your servant find nothing from me on Wednesday morning, you can conclude I can neither write nor receive your favours.

In that case pity and pray for your

C. H.

St. Alban's, *Tuesday*.

Oh! my dear, what shall I write? What *can* I? With what consciousness, by letter, do I approach you?—You will soon hear (if already you have not heard from the mouth of common fame) that your Clarissa Harlowe is gone off with a man!

I cannot at present tell you how, or where, you can direct to me. Very early shall I leave this place; harassed and fatigued to death.

Adieu, my dearest friend!—I beseech you to love me still.—But, alas! what will your mother say?—What will mine?

Love me still, and believe me

Your faithful

CL. HARLOWE.

(Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.)

Tuesday, 9 o'clock.

I WRITE because you enjoin me to do so. Love you still!—How can I help it, if I would? You may believe how I stand aghast. Your letter is known by my mother to have arrived, yet, as I hope to live, I know not how to communicate its contents to her.

Forgive me, my dear; surprise makes me write thus. I am out of breath.

If there be anything you want that is in my power, command

Your ever affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Tuesday night.

I THINK myself obliged to thank you, my dear Miss Howe, for your condescension in taking notice of a creature who has occasioned you so much scandal.

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After I had deposited my letter to you, written down to the last hour, as I may say, I returned to the Ivy Summer-house.

When the bell rang to call the servants to dinner, Betty came to me and asked if I had any commands before she went to hers.

I asked her some questions about the cascade, and expressed a curiosity to see how it played, in order to induce her—how cunning to cheat myself, as it proved!—to go thither if she found me not where she left me, it being at a part of the garden most distant from the Ivy Summer-house.

She could have hardly got into the house when I heard the first signal—O how my heart fluttered!—But no time was to be lost. I stepped to the garden-door, and seeing a clear coast, unbolted the already unlocked door—and there was he, all impatience, waiting for me.

A panic next to fainting seized me when I saw him. My heart seemed convulsed, and I trembled so I could hardly have kept my feet, had he not supported me.

“Fear nothing, dearest creature,” said he; “let us hasten away—the chariot is at hand—and, by this sweet condescension, you have obliged me beyond expression.”

Recovering my spirits a little as he kept drawing me after him; “O Mr. Lovelace,” said I, “I cannot go with you—indeed I cannot—I wrote you word so—let go my hand, and you shall see my letter. It has lain there from yesterday morning till within this half-hour. I bid you watch to the last for a letter from me, lest I should be obliged to revoke the appointment, and, had you followed the direction, you would have found it.”

“I have been watched, my dearest life,” said he, “and my trusty servant has been watched too, and dared not come near your wall. Here, we shall be discovered in a moment, sped away, my charmer! If you neglect this opportunity, you may never have another.”

“What is it you mean, sir? Let go my hand! I tell you,”—struggling, “I would rather die than go with you.”

“Good God!” said he, “what is it I hear? but,” still drawing me on, “it is no time to argue. To leave you now would be to lose you for ever.”

“As you value me, Mr. Lovelace, urge me no further. Let me give you the letter I had written.”

“Nothing, madam, will convince me; I will not leave you.

All my friends expect you. All your own are

against you. Wednesday next is perhaps the *fatal* day. Would you stay to be Solmes's wife?"

* * * *

"Whither, sir, do you draw me? Do you seek to keep me till my return shall grow dangerous?"

"My happiness, madam, and the safety of your implacable family depend on this movement."

"Let me judge for myself, sir. Let me go back. What mean you by this forcible treatment? I won't bear it. Your earnestness gives me apprehensions. Unhand me, or I will cry out for help."

"I will obey you." And he quitted my hand with a tender despondency that, knowing the violence of his temper, concerned me for him.

I was hastening from him when with a solemn air, looking upon his sword, but catching, as it were his hand from it, he folded his arms, as if a sudden thought had recovered him from a rashness.

"Stay one moment, best beloved! Hear me but a few words."

* * * *

"Remember that I come at your appointment to redeem you at the hazard of my life, from your persecutors.

But since I find you so ready to cry out for help against me, I will not ask you to retreat with me; I will attend you into the garden, and into the house. Nay, be not surprised, I will face them all, but not as a revenger, if they provoke me not too much. You shall see what I can bear for your sake."

"What mean you, Mr. Lovelace? Would you thus expose yourself? Would you thus expose me? Is that your generosity?"

And I wept. I could not help it.

He threw himself upon his knees at my feet. "Who can bear," said he, with an ardour that could not be feigned, his own eyes glistening, "who can bear to behold such sweet emotion? O charmer of my heart," and, respectfully still kneeling, he took my hand with both his, pressing it to his lips, "command me with you, command me from you; in every way I am all implicit obedience.

"The chariot ready: my friends with impatience expecting the result of *your own* appointment. A man whose will shall be entirely your will, imploring you thus, on his knees, imploring you—to be your own mistress; that is all. Nor will I ask for your favour, but as upon full proof I shall appear to deserve it. O my beloved creature!" pressing

my hand once more to his lips, "let not such an opportunity slip. You never, never will have such another."

My apprehensions I told him grew too strong for my heart. I should think very hardly of him, if he sought to detain me longer. But his acquiescence should engage my gratitude.

And then stooping to take up the key to let myself into the garden, he started, and looked as if he had heard somebody near the door, on the inside, clapping his hand on his sword.

This frightened me so that I thought I should have sunk down at his feet. But he instantly reassured me; he thought, he said, he had heard a rustling against the door. But *had* it been so the noise would have been stronger. It was only the effect of his apprehension for me.

And then taking up the key, he presented it to me. "If you *will* go, madam, I must enter the garden with you. Forgive me, but I *must* enter the garden with you."

"I have no patience," said I at last, taking courage, "to be thus constrained," and then freeing my hand I put the key in the lock, when with a voice of alarm loud whispering, and as if out of breath, "*They are at the door, my beloved creature!*" And taking the key from me, he fluttered with it, as if he would double-lock it. And instantly a voice from within cried out, bursting against the door, as if to break it open, "Are you there?—Come up this moment!—this moment!—Here they are—Here they are both together!—Your pistol this moment!" Then another push. He at the same moment drew his sword, and clapping it naked under his arm took both my trembling hands in his, and drawing me swiftly after him, "Fly, fly, my charmer; this moment is all you have for it," said he. "Your brother! or Solmes! will instantly burst the door. Fly, my dearest life, if you would not be more cruelly used than ever. If you would not see two or three murders committed at your feet, fly, fly, I beseech you."

"O Lord! help," cried I, like a fool, all in amaze and confusion, frightened beyond the power of control.

Now behind me, now before me, now on this side, now on that, turned I my affrighted face in the same moment; expecting a furious brother here, armed servants there, an enraged sister screaming, and a father armed with terror in his countenance more dreadful than even the drawn sword which I saw or those I apprehended. I ran as fast as he, yet knew not that I ran, my fears adding wings to my feet.

Thus terrified, I was out of sight of the door in a few minutes, and then putting my arm under his, his drawn sword in the other hand, he hurried me on, my voice contradicting my action, crying, "No, no," and straining my eyes to look back, till he brought me to the chariot, where attending were two armed servants of his own and two of Lord M.'s, on horseback.

O that I were again in my father's house, stealing down with a letter *to* you; my heart beating with expectation of finding one *from* you!

* * * *

This is the Wednesday morning I dreaded so much, that I once thought of it as the day of my doom. But of the Monday, it is plain, I ought to have been most apprehensive.

You will not wonder to see this narrative so dismally scrawled. It is written by snatches of my hand trembling with fatigue and grief.

I will not add to the length of it by the particulars of his behaviour to me and of our conversation at St. Alban's, and since, because those will come in course in the continuation of my story which no doubt you will expect from me.

Only thus much I will say that he is extremely respectful, even obsequiously so, at present, though I am so much dissatisfied with him and myself that he has hitherto had no great cause to praise my complaisance to him. Indeed, I can hardly, at times, bear the seducer in my sight.

The lodgings I am in are inconvenient. I shall not stay in them, so it signifies nothing to tell you how to direct to me hither. And where my next may be as yet I know not.

He knows that I am writing to you, and has offered to send my letter when finished, by a servant of his. But I thought I could not be too cautious as I am now situated, in having a letter of this importance conveyed to you.

(Mr. Lovelace to Joseph Leman.)*

Saturday, April 8th.

HONEST JOSEPH,

At length your beloved young lady has consented to free herself from the cruel treatment she has so long borne. She is to meet me without the garden-door at about four on Monday afternoon.

I shall have a chariot-and-six in the by-road fronting the private path to Harlowe-paddock, and several of my friends

* Containing instructions for aiding in carrying off Clarissa.—ED.

and servants not far off, armed to protect her if there be occasion—every one charged to avoid mischief.

* * * *

All my fear is that, when she comes to the point, she may want to go back. If she should, and I should be unable to prevail upon her, all your past services will avail nothing, and she will be lost to me for ever.

You see what confidence I repose in your fidelity.

Be mindful, therefore, of the following directions:—this will probably be your last trouble until my beloved and I are joined in holy wedlock, and then we will be sure to take care of you. No man ever reproached me for breach of word.

Contrive to be in the garden, in *disguise*, unseen by your young lady. If you find the door unbolted, you will know that she and I are together. It will be locked, but my key will be on the ground.

If you hear our voices parleying, keep at the door till I hem twice. Be watchful for this signal, for I must not hem loud lest she should take it for a signal. Perhaps, in struggling to prevail I may have an opportunity to strike the door with my heel to confirm you, then you are to make a violent burst against the door, drawing backward and forward the bolt in a hurry. Then, with another push, cry out (as if you saw some of the family), “Come up—come up instantly! here they are!—here they are! Hasten!” and mention swords and pistols with a terrible voice. Then shall I prevail upon her no doubt, if loth before, to fly. If I cannot, I will enter the garden with her, and the house too, be the consequence what it will. So affrighted, there is no question but she will fly.

When you think us at a sufficient distance, open the door cautiously with your key. I would not have her know you have a hand in this matter out of my great regard to you.

When you have opened the door, put the key in your pocket, then put mine in the lock on the *inside*, that it may appear as if the door was opened by herself.

They should conclude she is gone off by her own consent, that they may see no hopes of tempting her back again.

If they do not interrupt us, come out, follow us at a distance, and, with uplifted hands and wild gestures cry out for help.

Tell the family that you saw me enter a chariot with her: a dozen or more men on horseback attending us—all armed, some with blunderbusses, and that we took quite the contrary way to that we shall take.

You see, honest Joseph, how careful I am to avoid mischief.

You must tell them that your young lady seemed to run as fast off with me as I with her. This will also confirm to them that all pursuit is in vain. An end will be hereby put to Solmes's hopes, and her friends after a while will be more studious to be reconciled to her than to get her back. So you will be a happy instrument of great good to all round, and this will one day be acknowledged by both families. You will then be every one's favourite.

If she should guess at you or find you out, I have it already in my head to write a letter for you to copy; which occasionally produced will set you right with her.

This time be diligent, be careful; this will be the crown of all, and, once more, depend for a recompense upon the honour of

Your assured friend

R. LOVELACE.

(Joseph to Mr. Lovelace.)

HONNERED SIR,

I am infinitely obliged to your honour, but this last command seems so *intricket*. Lord be merciful to me! How have I been led!

You may well be kind and honnerable to this young lady; God love her!

I will do the best I am able, but perhaps she will not make all this trouble needful. If she has promised, she will stand to it.

I love your honner for contriving to save mischief.

Commending myself to your honner's further favour, I rest

Your honner's dutiful servant to command,

J. LEMAN.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

St. Alban's, *Monday night*.

I SNATCH a few moments while my beloved is retired I hope to rest, to say we have passed the Rubicon. No pursuit.

Never was joy more exquisite than mine.

But let me inquire, lest the angel be flown away!

O no! she is in the next apartment. Mine for ever!

As I have ordered it her flight will appear to be with her own consent, but if I doubt her love, let me tell thee, that

dearly as I love her, if there was a shadow of a doubt in her mind whether she preferred me to any man living, I would show her no mercy.

Tuesday.

On the wings of love I fly to my charmer, who, perhaps, by this time is rising to encourage the tardy dawn.

* * * *

But why, as in the chariot, as in the inn, at alighting, all heart-bursting grief, my dearest creature? So persecuted as thou wert! So much in danger of the most-abhorred compulsion. Yet grief so *unsuspectably* sincere for an escape so critical!—Take care—take care, O beloved of my soul, for jealous is the heart in which love has erected a temple.

* * * *

She comes! And the sun is just rising to attend her.

Adieu, be half as happy as I am, and next myself thou wilt be the happiest man in the world.

R. LOVELACE.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

I WILL pursue my melancholy story.

Being thus hurried to the chariot, it drove away at full gallop, nor stopped till it reached St. Alban's just as day shut in.

I thought I should have fainted several times by the way.

"God protect me," said I to myself, "can it be I that am here?" My heart ready to burst with grief.

* * * *

I have reason to think there were other horsemen at his devotion; three or four persons, above the rank of servants, galloping by now and then on each side the chariot. But he took no notice of them, and I had too much grief, mingled with indignation, notwithstanding all his blandishments to ask any questions about them.

Think, my dear, what were my thoughts on alighting; having no attendant of my own sex, no clothes but what I had on, neither hood nor hat, only a handkerchief about my neck, and fatigued to death. In such a foam the horses, that every one in the inn we put up at guessed—they could do no otherwise—that I was a young giddy creature who had run away from her friends. This it was easy to see by their whispering and gaping, more people coming in by turns than were necessary for the attendance.

The mistress of the house, whom he sent in to me, showed

me another apartment, and, seeing me ready to faint brought hartshorn and water, and upon my desiring to be left alone for half an hour, retired, for I found my heart ready to burst. The moment she was gone, fastening the door, I threw myself into a chair, and gave way to a flood of tears, which relieved me.

Mr. Lovelace, sooner than I wished, sent up the gentlewoman, who pressed me in his name, to admit my brother, or come down to him. He had told her I was his sister, that he had brought me, against my will, and without warning, from a house in order to prevent my marrying against the consent of my friends, to whom he was now conducting me, and that having given me no time for a travelling dress, I was greatly offended with him.

So, my dear, I was forced to countenance this, which, indeed, somewhat suited me, having no mind to talk or look up. My dejection might well pass before the gentlewoman as a fit of sullenness.

When we were alone, he repeated all the vows he had ever made, and asked whether I chose to set out next day for either of his aunts?

I knew not what to say or do.

"Whether I chose to have private lodgings in either of those ladies' neighbourhood, as were once my thoughts?"

I was still silent.

"Whether I chose to go to either of Lord M.'s seats in Berks, or the county we were in?"

In lodgings, I said; anywhere where he was not to be.

He had *promised this*, he owned, and he would keep his word, as soon as he found all danger of pursuit over. But London was safest and most private. His relations should visit me there the moment I would admit them. His cousin Charlotte particularly should attend me as soon as she was able to go abroad. Meantime, would I go to Lady Betty Lawrance's? I should be the most welcome guest she ever received.

* * * *

I thought myself, I said, extremely unhappy. I knew not what to determine upon. My reputation was now, no doubt, utterly ruined, and I could not but think I had been dealt artfully with.

Then he began his vows, and would fain have had me accept a hundred-pound note, which unawares he put into my hand, but which, you may be sure, I refused, and as soon as I could broke from him to write to you.

* * * *

Before five o'clock (Tuesday morning) the maid came up to tell me my *brother* was ready, and that breakfast waited me in the parlour. I went down with a heavy heart, and received great compliments from him on being so ready to continue our journey.

He had had the thought to purchase for me a velvet hood and short cloak, trimmed with silver. He must reward himself, the artful encroacher said, before the landlady and her maids and niece, for his forethought, and would salute his pretty sullen sister! He took his reward. While he assured me, still before them, a vile wretch! that I had nothing to fear from meeting with parents who so dearly loved me.

When we had got into the chariot he asked me whether I had any objection to go to Lord M.'s Hertfordshire seat? His lordship, he said, was in Berkshire.

I told him my choice was to go to a private lodging, and for him to be at a distance from me, till I heard how things were taken by my friends. For, although I had but little hopes of a reconciliation, yet if they knew I was in his protection, there would be no hopes at all.

I should govern him as I pleased, he assured me. But he thought *London* was the best place. If I were once there in a lodging to my liking, he would go to M. Hall.

He proposed, and I consented, to put up at an inn near the Lawn, Lord M.'s seat.

Here I got two hours to myself, and wrote to you and to my sister, apprising my family that I was well, and begging that my clothes and fifty guineas left in my *escritoire* might be sent me.

He asked if I had considered whither to have my letters directed. I told him I had not. "I will tell you, then, madam," said he, "how it shall be managed. Whether you go to London or not, your family had better think you are there. Be pleased, therefore, to direct that your letters shall be left at Mr. Osgood's, Soho Square." Having no objection to this, I wrote accordingly, but what answer I shall have gives me no small anxiety.

Mr. Lovelace went out for an hour, and when he came in desired admittance to me at once. I sent him word that I was busy, and should be so till dinner. He then hastened that, as I heard, with a curse upon the cook and waiters.

I ventured afterwards to check him for his free words, as we sat at dinner.

"A sad life," said I, "these innkeepers live, Mr. Lovelace."

"No; pretty well, I believe; but why, madam, think you that fellows who eat and drink at other men's cost should be entitled to pity?"

"Because of the soldiers they are obliged to quarter. Bless me! how I heard one of them swear just now at a meek man, as I judge by his gentle answers! Well do they make it a proverb—*Like a trooper!*"

He bit his lip.

"Ay, madam," said he, "these troopers are sad swearing fellows. I think their officers should chastise them for it."

"I am sure they deserve it," replied I; "for swearing is an *unmanly* vice; since it proclaims the profligate's want of power and his wickedness. Could such a one punish as he speaks, he would be a fiend!"

"Charmingly observed, by my soul, madam! The next trooper I hear swear and curse, I'll tell him what an *unmanly* wretch he is."

Mrs. Greme, Lord M.'s housekeeper, came to pay her *duty* to me, as Mr. Lovelace called it; and was urgent with me to go to her lord's house,* letting me know what handsome things she had heard her lord and all the family say of me, and what wishes they had for the honour she hoped would soon be done them.

On inquiry about private lodging, she recommended me to her sister-in-law, eight miles from where I now am. And what pleased me most was that Mr. Lovelace obliged her to accompany me in the chariot, he riding on horseback with his two servants and one of Lord M.'s, and there we arrived at four o'clock.

Mrs. Greme and I had a good deal of talk about him; she was very easy in her answers to all I asked, and has, I find, a serious turn.

The people of the farm here are very honest-looking folks. Sorlings is the name—a widow with two sons and two daughters.

I believe I must stay here longer than at first I thought I should.

We have been alarmed with threats of a pursuit, founded on a letter from his intelligencer.

I shall send this, as my former, by a poor man who travels

* Lovelace, in a future letter to Belford, gives his reasons for this introduction.

every day with pedlary matters. He will leave it at Mrs. Knollys's, as you direct.

CL. HARLOWE.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

April 11-12.

I TOLD thee my reasons for not going in search of a letter of countermand. I was right, for if I had I should have found such a one, and had I received it she would not have met me. Did she think that after I had been more than once disappointed I would not keep her to her promises?

The moment I heard the door unbolt, I was sure of her. That motion made my heart bound to my throat. But when that was followed with the presence of my charmer, flashing upon me in a flood of brightness, sweetly dressed, though unprepared for a journey, I felt as if treading on air, and hardly thought myself a mortal.

Thou shalt judge of her dress. I am a critic, thou knowest, in women's dresses. There is such a native elegance in this lady that her person adorns what she wears more than dress can adorn her.

Thou hast often heard me praise her complexion. I never beheld a skin so lustrously fair. The lily and the driven snow it is nonsense to talk of. Her lawn and her laces one might compare to those, but what a whited wall would a woman appear who had a complexion which would justify such unnatural comparisons.

Thou hast heard me describe the wavy ringlets of her shining hair needing neither art nor powder, and wantoning in and out a neck beautiful beyond description.

Her head-dress was a Brussels lace mob peculiarly adapted to the charming turn of her features, a sky-blue riband illustrated that. But although the weather was somewhat sharp, she had neither hat nor hood. She seems to have intended to show me that she was determined not to keep to her appointment. O Jack, that such a sweet girl should be such a rogue!

Her morning gown was a pale primrose-coloured paduasoy, the cuffs and robings curiously embroidered in a pattern of roses and leaves—a pair of diamond snaps in her ears.

Her ruffles were the same as her mob! her apron flowered lawn, her coat white satin quilted, blue satin her shoes, braided with blue, without lace, for what need has the prettiest foot in the world for ornament? Neat buckles in them; and on her charming arms a pair of velvet glove-like

muffs.* Her hands, velvet themselves, thus uncovered the freer to be grasped by those of her adorer. What were my transports when the undrawn bolt presented to me my goddess! Her emotions were sweetly feminine, then the fire of her starry eyes began to sink into a less dazzling languor. She trembled. She was even fainting when I clasped her in my arms.

* * * *

I would have drawn her after me. Then began a contention the most vehement that ever I had with woman. It would pain thy friendly heart to be told the trouble I had with her. I begged, I prayed her on my knees to answer her own appointment, and had I not happily provided for such a struggle, knowing whom I had to deal with, I had certainly failed in my design, and as certainly would have accompanied her in without thee and thy brethren. Who knows what might have been the consequence?

But my honest agent answering my signal, *though not quite so soon as I expected*, in the manner thou knowest I had prescribed—"Fly, fly, my beloved creature," cried I, drawing my sword with a flourish, as if I would have slain the supposed intruders, and, seizing her trembling hands I drew her after me so swiftly that my feet, winged by love, could hardly keep pace with hers, agitated by fear. And so I became her emperor.

How it swells my pride to have been able to outwit such a vigilant charmer! I am taller by half a yard in my imagination than I was. I look down upon everybody now. Last night I was still more extravagant. I took off my hat, as I walked, to see if the lace were not scorched, supposing it had brushed down a star, and before I put it on again in wanton heart's-ease I was for buffeting the moon.

In short, my whole soul is joy. When I go to bed I laugh myself to sleep. I awake either laughing or singing. Yet nothing in view, neither, for "*I am not yet reformed enough!*"

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

Wednesday night, April 12th.

I HAVE your narrative, my dear. You are the same noble creature you ever were. Above disguise, above art, above attempting to extenuate a failing.

The only family in the world, yours, surely, that could have driven such a daughter upon such extremities.

* Mittens.—ED.

I am not surprised, now I have read your narrative, that so bold and so contriving a man—I am forced to break off.

* * * *

You stood it out much better and longer. Here again comes my bustling mother!

* * * *

Don't be so angry at yourself. Did you not do for the best at the time? As to your first fault, *the answering his letters*, it was almost incumbent upon you to assume the guardianship of such a family when the bravo of it had run riot as he did and brought himself into danger.

Except your mother who has no will of her own, have any of them common sense?

Forgive me, my dear. Here is that stupid Uncle Antony of yours—a pragmatical, conceited positive. He came yesterday in a fearful pucker.

My mother was dressing; she would not see him in *deshabille* for the world. His errand was to set her against you and to show their rage on your going away. When she came down, they locked themselves in. I had a great mind to have made them open the door.

* * * *

After the old fellow had marched off—excuse me, my dear—there was a gloomy, Harlowelike reserve in my mother's appearance, which, upon a few resenting flirts of mine was followed by a prohibition of correspondence. This put us, you may suppose, upon terms not the most agreeable. I desired to know if I were prohibited *dreaming* of you? for, my dear, you have all my sleeping as well as waking hours.

* * * *

Mr. Hickman, who greatly honours you, has, unknown to me, interposed so warmly in your favour with my mother, that it makes for him no small merit with me.

What an incoherent letter will you have, when I can get it to you! But, now I know where to send it, Mr. Hickman shall find me a messenger. Yet, if he be detected, poor soul, he will be *Harlowed-off*, as well as his *meek mistress*.

Your father, I hear, is all rage and violence. All your family accuse you of acting with deep art, and are put upon supposing that you every hour exult over them with your man in the success of it.

How they took your flight, when they found it out, may be better supposed than described.

Your aunt Hervey it seems was the first that went down to the Ivy Summer-house. Betty followed her, and they, not finding you there, went on towards the Cascade, according to a hint of yours.

Returning by the garden-door they met a servant,—they don't say it was that Joseph Leman; but it is very likely that it was, running, as he said, from pursuing Mr. Lovelace, a great hedge-stake in his hand and out of breath, to alarm the family,

If it were this fellow, and if he were employed in the double agency of cheating them and cheating you, what shall we think of the wretch you are with? Run away from him, my dear, if so—no matter to whom—or marry him, if you cannot.

Your aunt and all your family were accordingly alarmed by this fellow, evidently when too late for pursuit. They got together, and, in a *posse*, ran to the place of interview, and some to the tracks of the chariot-wheels without stopping. And having heard the man's tale upon the spot, a general lamentation, a mutual upbraiding, and rage, and grief, were echoed from the different persons, according to their different tempers. They returned like fools as they went.

Your brother at first ordered horses and armed men to be got ready for a pursuit. Solmes and your uncle *Tony* were to be of the party, but your mother and your aunt Hervey dissuaded them from it, for fear of adding evil to evil, not doubting but Lovelace had taken measures to support himself in what he had done, and especially when the servant declared that he saw you run with him as fast as you could set foot to ground, and that there were several armed men on horseback at a small distance off.

Adieu, my dear. May Heaven preserve you!

A. H.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Thursday afternoon, April 13th.

I AM infinitely concerned, my ever-dear, kind friend, that I am the sad occasion of the displeasure between your mother and you. How many persons have I made unhappy!

I enclose the copy of my letter to my sister, which you are desirous to see. You will observe, that although I have not demanded my estate in form, yet that I have hinted at leave to retire to it. It was not proper, I believe you will think,

on many accounts, to own that I was carried off against my inclination. I am, my dearest friend,

Your affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

(To Miss Arabella Harlowe.)

[Enclosed in the preceding.]

St. Alban's, *April 11th.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

I have I confess, been guilty of an action which I should have thought an inexcusable one, had I been used with less severity than I have been of late, and had I not had too great reason to apprehend that I was to be made a sacrifice to a man I could not bear to think of.

I could wish I had trusted to the relenting of my honoured parents, to whom I am ready to return, if I may retire to the Grove, on conditions before offered.

Nor will I be dependent upon the person by whose means I have taken this truly reluctant step, inconsistent with any reasonable engagement I shall enter into. Let me not have it to say that I have a sister but not a friend. My reputation, dearer to me than life, is suffering. A little lenity will make that pass for a temporary misunderstanding which otherwise will be a stain for life upon one who has already been treated with great *unkindness*.

For your own sake therefore and the family's, aggravate not my fault, nor by widening the difference, expose a sister for ever—Prays

Your affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

I shall take it for a favour to have my clothes directly sent me with fifty guineas you will find in my *escritoire*, of which I enclose the key, also the divinity and miscellany classes of my library, and, if it be thought fit, my jewels—directed for *me*, at Mr. Osgood's, Soho Square.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

I OBLIGED the dear creature highly, I could perceive, by bringing Mrs. Greame to attend her, and to suffer that good woman's recommendation of lodgings to take place, on her refusal to go to The Lawn.

She must believe all my views honourable, leaving it to her choice whither she would go.

She was visibly pleased with my putting Mrs. Greame into the chaise with her and riding myself.

Some would have been apprehensive of what might pass between her and Mrs. Greme. But as all my relations believe the justice of my intentions, I was in no pain on that account, and the less, as I have been always wishing to be thought better than I am.

And then Mrs. Greme is a pious matron. She used formerly, when there were hopes of reformation, to pray for me. She hardly, I doubt, continues the custom now. . . Was it not right to introduce such a good woman to the dear creature?

As things stand, she dare not own she went off against her own consent.

* * * *

She has received an answer from Miss Howe to the letter she wrote to her from St. Alban's. What the contents I know not. She was drowned in tears on the perusal.

Miss Howe is a charming creature, but confoundedly smart. I am afraid of her. Her mother can hardly keep her in.

Mrs. Howe is impatient of contradiction. So is her daughter.

* * * *

My beloved has been writing to her saucy friend, I believe, all that has befallen her, and what has passed between us hitherto. She has written also to her sister for her clothes, some gold, and books.

She *may* write. She must be obliged to me at last, with all her pride. Miss Howe, indeed, will be ready enough to supply her, but I question whether she can do it without her mother, who is as covetous as the grave.

I was forced to put it into the sweet novice's head as well for *my* sake as for *hers*, lest we should be traceable by *her* direction, whither to direct the sending of her clothes, if they incline to do her that small piece of justice.

In continuation.

This is Wednesday, the day that I was to have lost my charmer for ever to the hideous Solmes! With what high satisfaction and heart's ease can I now sit down and triumph over my men in straw at Harlowe Place! Yet 'tis perhaps best for them that she got off as she did. Who knows what consequences might have followed upon my attending her in, or if she had not met me, upon my projected visit, followed by my myrmidons?

* * * *

Why will this admirable creature defy the power she is absolutely dependent upon? Why will she still wish to my face that she had never left her father's house? Why will she deny her company till she makes me lose my patience, and lay myself open to her resentment? And why, when she is offended, does she carry her indignation to the utmost length that a scornful beauty, in the very height of her power and pride, can go?

Is it prudent in *her* to tell me that she was thrown upon me by a perverse fate, that she knows better than to value herself upon my volubility, that she shall never forgive herself for *meeting me*, that she will take care of herself, and since her friends think it not worth while to pursue her, she will be left to her own care, that I shall make Mrs. Sorlings' house more agreeable by my absence, and go to Berks, or wherever I will, with all her heart?

The impolitic charmer!

* * * *

I need nothing but patience to have all power and — What shall we say if these declarations of regret for meeting me, these resentments, these angry commands to leave her, and what if my forbearing the subject of *matrimony* come out to be the true cause of her petulance and uneasiness?

R. LOVELACE.

(Extract from a letter from Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

You hope, you tell me, to have your money and clothes sent you. I am sorry to say I have heard that they have sat in council, and that your mother was the only person who was for sending you your things. I charge you then to accept my offer, and I can supply you with what you want.

(Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.)

You tell me, my dear, that my clothes and the little sum of money I left behind me will not be sent me; but I still hope. It is yet early days. When their passions subside, they will better consider of the matter, and especially as I have my ever dear and excellent mother for my friend in this request. O the sweet indulgence! How has my heart bled, and how does it still bleed for her!

* * * *

Continued, April 14th.

I WILL give you the particulars of a conversation between Mr. Lovelace and me, which I call agreeable. He began by

telling me he had heard my friends were resolved to set aside all thoughts of pursuing me, and that he therefore attended to know my pleasure.

"Let me hear," said I, willing to try if he had any particular view, "what *you* think most advisable?"

Had not the man a fine opportunity here to speak out? He had; and thus he used it:—

"To waive, madam, what I *would* say till I have more courage to speak out [*more courage! Mr. Lovelace, more courage, my dear!*], I will only propose what I think will be most agreeable to *you*. *If you choose not to go to Lady Betty's*, that you take a turn across the country to Windsor?"

"Why to Windsor?"

"Because it is a pleasant place, lying near Lord M.'s, not far from Lady Betty's residence by Oxford, and near London, whither you may retire at your pleasure. . . . But if I had thought of any other place that would please and suit me better, by being nearer Miss Howe for instance, he had nothing else to do than obey me."

* * * *

A grateful thing he named to me, to send for my Hannah, unless I would choose one of the young women here, both of whom, as I had acknowledged, were very obliging.

I took this very well, as he might see. As for Hannah, I had thought of sending for her, and for these young women, I should have thought it a pity to break in upon their family concerns by removing one of them.

Upon the whole, I told him that I thought his proposal of Windsor not amiss, and that I would remove thither, if I could get a lodging only for myself and an upper chamber for Hannah, for that my stock of money was but small, as was easy to be conceived, and I should be very loth to be obliged to anybody.

He again proposed himself for my banker. I declined his offer.

He asked whether I would choose to lodge in the town of Windsor or out of it?

"As near the Castle," I said, "as possible, for the convenience of going constantly to the public worship."

He should be very glad if he could procure me accommodations in any of the canons' houses, which he imagined would be more agreeable to me than any other, and since it was now his part to recommend himself to me in earnest, he should set about it in the only way he knew it could be done,

adding, with a serious air, "I am but a young man. I have run a long course. It is high time to reform. It is my belief that a life of virtue can afford such pleasures as will be for *ever* blooming—ever new."

I was agreeably surprised. His aspect became his words.

Surely, my dear, the man *must be in earnest*.

Mr. Lovelace has gone to Windsor, having left two servants to attend on me.

I have written to my aunt Hervey to supplicate her interest in my behalf for my clothes, books, and money, signifying to her that it were perhaps better, after the usage I have received from my brother and sister, that I may be allowed to be distant from them, offering to take my father's directions as to the manner I shall live in, and in everything to show the dutiful subordination to which I am willing to conform.

My aunt will know by my letter to my sister how to direct to me, if she be permitted to favour me with a line.

Had I owned that I was forced away against my intention, might they not have insisted upon my immediate return? Then, were I to have gone back, it must have been upon their own terms. *No conditioning with a father is a maxim with my father and my uncles.*

* * * *

It gives me great anguish of mind to be forced to sanctify, as I may say, by my seeming *after*-approbation, a measure I was so artfully tricked into, and which I was so much resolved not to take.

How one evil brings on another is sorrowfully witnessed
Your affectionate

C. H.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

April 14th.

Now, Belford, can it enter into thy head what I meant by the proposal of the Windsor lodgings?

To leave her for a day or two would look like confiding in her favour. I could not think of this while I believed her friends would pursue us. But now that they would not receive her back, what should hinder me from giving this mark of my obedience? I could leave Will, who can do everything but write, and Lord M.'s Jonas as *attendants*; Jonas to be dispatched to me occasionally, when I would inform Will of my motions.

As to Windsor, I had no design to carry her thither.

* * * *

In continuation.

Canst thou imagine what I meant by proposing Hannah, or one of the girls here, for her attendant?

But thou wilt not pretend to guess.

Well, then, I'll tell thee.

Believing she would certainly propose to have that favourite wench about her as soon as she was a little settled, I had caused the girl to be inquired after, with an intent to make interest, that a month's warning should be insisted on by her master or mistress, or by some means, to prevent her coming. But fortune fights for me. The wench is luckily ill; a rheumatic disorder has obliged her to leave her place, and confines her to her chamber. Poor Hannah! How I pity the girl! I intend to make the poor wench a small present on the occasion—I know it will oblige my charmer.

And so, Jack, pretending not to know anything of the matter, I pressed her to send for Hannah. She knew I had a regard for this servant, because of her love to her lady: but *now* I have a greater regard for her than ever.

R. L.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Saturday evening.

MR. LOVELACE has seen divers apartments at Windsor, but none he says fit for me. He has been very solicitous to keep to my instructions, which looks well.

I told him I would be willing to stay at Mrs. Sorlings' a little longer, provided he would leave me and go to Lord M.'s, or wherever he thought best.

He again proposed to send for Hannah. I told him I designed to do so through you; and I beg of you, my dear, to cause her to be sent for. Your faithful Robert will know where she is.

He took notice of the serious humour he found me in, and the redness of my eyes. I had just been answering your letter.

Had he not approached me in a very respectful manner, and made an unexceptionable report of his inquiries, I was prepared, notwithstanding the good terms we parted upon, to have given him a very unwelcome reception; for the contents of your last letter had so affected me that I beheld with

indignation one who had been the cause of all the evils I suffer. He hinted that he had received letters from Lady Betty and Miss Montague; I wonder he did not show me their contents.

* * * *

He again, on my declaring myself uneasy, proposed that I should put myself under Lady Betty's protection; and on my declining to do that, he urged upon me to make a demand for my estate.

* * * *

"So, sir, you would have me employ a lawyer as to litigating with my father?"

"No, I would not," snatching my hand, "except you would make me the lawyer."

With an affrighted earnestness I begged of him to withdraw.

I have long been sick of myself, and now I am more and more so.

Yours,

C. H.

April 16th.

BEFORE I could finish my last to you, he sent up to beg admittance.

* * * *

"I have had letters, madam," said he, "from Lady Betty Lawrance and my cousin Charlotte Montague."

Lady Betty, in hers, expresses herself in the most obliging manner to me. She wishes him so to behave as to encourage me to make him happy. She desires her compliments to me; and expresses her impatience to see, as her niece, so *celebrated a lady* [those are her high words]. She hopes I will not delay the ceremony; because, that performed, will be to her, Lord M., and Lady Sarah, a sure pledge of her nephew's merits and good behaviour.

She was sorry to hear of the hardships I had met with on his account: that he will be the most ungrateful of men if he make not all up to me: that she thinks his family should supply the lost favour of my own: for her part, nothing of that kind shall be wanting.

Her ladyship observes that the treatment he had received from my family would have been more unaccountable had it not been owing to his careless manners.

She hopes he will convince the Harlowe family they thought worse of him than he deserved; but since it was

now in his power to establish his character for ever, she prayed God to enable him to do so for his honour, and the honour of their *house*. (Her magnificent word.) She desires to be informed of our nuptials as soon as celebrated, that she may be the earliest to felicitate me.

But her ladyship gives me no invitation to attend her before marriage, which I might have expected, from what he had told me.

He showed me part of Miss Montague's letter. She also "wishes for his *speedy* nuptials, and to see her new cousin at M. Hall." When this happy day shall be past, she proposes "to make one in my train to the Hall," but *says nothing in excuse for not meeting me on the road, or at St. Alban's*, as he had made me expect she would; yet mentions her having been indisposed. Mr. Lovelace had also told me that Lord M. *was ill of the gout*, which Miss Montague's letter confirms.

* * * *

You may believe, my dear, that these letters put me in good humour with him. He saw it in my countenance.

He then urged me to go directly to Lady Betty's.

"But how," said I, "can I do that, as her ladyship has given me no invitation?"

"That," he was sure, "was owing to her doubt that it would be accepted."

"That doubt," I said, "was enough to deter me."

I thank *you*, sir, I have no clothes fit to be seen in."

"O, I was fit to appear in the drawing-room, full dress and jewels excused; and should make the most amiable [he must mean *extraordinary*] figure there. He was astonished at the elegance of my dress. By what art he knew not, but I appeared as if I had a different suit every day. Besides, his cousin Montague would supply me with all I wanted, and he would write to her if I would give him leave."

"Do you think me the jay in the fable?" said I; "would you have me visit the owners of borrowed dresses in their own clothes?—Surely, Mr. Lovelace, you think I have either a low or a confident mind."

"Would I choose to go to London for a few days to furnish myself with clothes?"

"Not at your expense, sir," said I.

I could not appear in earnest in my displeasure at his contrivances to get me away, if I were not occasionally to show my fretfulness upon the destitute condition to which he has

reduced me. When people set out wrong together, it is difficult to avoid recriminations.

"He much wished he knew my mind."

"My mind is that you, sir, should leave me. You know why I am earnest for your absence. It is that I may appear independent, in hopes by that means to find a mode of reconciliation with my friends; and since I find I stand so well with you, I will acquaint you when absent with every step I take, but not with intention to be accountable to you, either as to my acceptance or non-acceptance of those overtures. They know that I have a power by my grandfather's will to bequeath the estate he left me in a way that may affect them. This consideration, I hope, will procure me some from them when their passion subsides, and when they know I am independent of you."

"Charming reasoning! What a happiness to have a woman of honour and generosity to depend upon! Had he, on his first entrance into the world, met with such a one, he had never been other than a man of strict virtue."

* * * *

This brought on a serious question or two.

* * * *

He has made a grateful proposal to me; that I would send for my Norton to attend me.

He saw by my eyes, he said, that he had at last been happy in an expedient. "Why," says he, "did not I think of it before?" and, snatching my hand, "Shall I write, madam? Shall I go and fetch the worthy woman myself?"

After a little consideration, I told him that this was indeed a grateful motion; but that I apprehended it would put her to a difficulty, as it would make a woman of her known prudence appear to countenance a fugitive daughter, in opposition to her parents. Her coming to me would deprive her of my mother's favour.

"O my beloved creature!" said he, generously enough, "let not this be an obstacle. I will do everything for Mrs. Norton you wish. Let me go for her."

More coolly than perhaps his generosity deserved, I told him it was certain that I must soon hear from my friends. I should not, meantime, embroil anybody with them. That, besides, the good Norton had a mind above her fortune, and would sooner want than be beholden to anybody improperly.

"Improperly," said he. "Have not persons of merit a

right to all the benefits conferred upon them? Mrs. Norton is so good a woman, that I shall think she lays me under an obligation, if she will put it in my power to serve her."

How could this man, with such powers of right thinking, be so far depraved by evil habits, as to disgrace his talents by wrong acting?

* * * *

"Well, sir," said I, rising to leave him, "something must be resolved upon."

But I will postpone this subject till to-morrow morning.

C. H.

(Clarissa, *in continuation.*)

Monday, April 17th.

LATE as I went to bed I had very little rest.

Mr. Lovelace joined me in the garden at six, and after salutations asked me to resume the subject of lodgings in London.

"I think you mentioned one to me, sir?"

He had not mentioned it as one he thought I should accept.

But the result was this:—He wrote to a Mr. Doleman, a married man of fortune and character, desiring him to provide apartments ready furnished—a bed-chamber, and one for a maid, with the use of a parlour. This letter he gave me to peruse, and then sealed it up, and dispatched it away in my presence, by one of his servants, who is to bring back an answer.

I hold myself in readiness to set out for London, unless you, my dear, advise the contrary.

C. H.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

[He tells his friend that, calling at the Lawn on his way to M. Hall (for he owns that he went not to Windsor), he found the letters from Lady Betty Lawrance and his cousin Montague, which Mrs. Greme was about sending to him by a special messenger. He gives the particulars of Mrs. Greme's report of what passed between the lady and her, and makes such declarations to Mrs. Greme of his honour and affection for the lady as put her upon writing to her sister Sorlings.]

UPON such good terms were we when we parted, I was surprised to find so solemn a brow upon my return, and her charming eyes red with weeping. But when I had understood she had received letters from Miss Howe, it was

natural to imagine that little devil had put her out of humour with me.

I perceive that my charmer is always more sullen when she receives, and has perused, a letter from that vixen, than at other times. But as the sweet maid shows, even then, more of passive grief than of active spirit, I hope she is rather lamenting than plotting. And indeed for what now should she plot when I am become a reformed man, and am hourly improving in my morals? Nevertheless I must contrive some way or other to get at their correspondence. Only to see the turn of it; that's all.

But no attempt of this kind must be made yet. A detected invasion in an article so sacred would ruin me beyond retrieval. Nevertheless it vexes me to the heart to think that she is hourly writing her whole mind on all that passes between her and me, I under the same roof with her, yet kept at such awful distance, that I dare not break into a correspondence that may perhaps be a means to defeat all my devices.

(Extract from a letter from Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

I THINK there can be no objection to your going to London. There, as in the centre, you will be in the way of hearing from everybody, and sending to anybody. And then you will put all his sincerity to the test, as to his promised absence, and such-like.

But indeed, me dear, I think you have nothing for it but marriage. You may try (that you may say you *have* tried) what your relations can be brought to; but the moment they refuse your proposals, submit to the yoke, and make the best of it. He will be a savage indeed if he makes you speak out. Yet it is my opinion that you *must* bend a little; for he cannot bear to be thought slightly of.

* * * *

Your Hannah cannot attend you. The poor girl left her place a fortnight ago on account of a rheumatic disorder, and has been confined to her room ever since. She burst into tears when Kitty carried her your desire of having her with you, and called herself doubly unhappy that she could not attend a mistress whom she so dearly loved.

Your ever affectionate

A. H.

(Extract from Clarissa's letter to Miss Howe.)

April 19th.

I AM glad, my dear friend, that you approve of my removal to London.

The disagreement between your mother and you gives me inexpressible affliction.

If I am to be obliged to anybody in England for money, it shall be to you. Your mother need not know of your kindness to me, you say. But she *must* know it, if it be done, and if she challenge my beloved friend upon it; for would you either falsify or prevaricate? I wish your mother could be made easy on this head. Forgive me, my dear, but I know, yet once she had a better opinion of me. O my inconsiderate rashness! Excuse me once more, I pray.

* * * *

I am unhappy that I cannot have my worthy Hannah. I am as sorry for the poor creature's illness as for my own disappointment by it. Now, my dear Miss Howe, since you press me to be beholden to you, and I know you would think me proud if I absolutely refused your favour, pray be so good as to send her two guineas in my name.

April 20th.

MR. LOVELACE's servant is already returned with an answer from his friend Mr. Doleman, who has taken pains in his inquiries, and is very particular. Mr. Lovelace brought me the letter.

C. H.

(Mr. Doleman to R. Lovelace, Esq.)

April 18th.

"I AM rejoiced to hear that we shall so soon have you in town, and you will be the more welcome, if what report says is true, that you are actually married to the fair lady upon whom we have heard you make such encomiums.

"Mrs. Doleman has seen lodgings in Norfolk Street and Cecil Street; but though the prospect to the Thames and Surrey Hills looks inviting, I suppose they are too near the City.

"You may have good accommodation in Dover Street at a widow's, the relit of an officer in the Guards, who dying soon after he had purchased his commission, she was obliged to let lodgings.

"As these lodgings seem likely to please you, I have been the more particular in my inquiries about them. They are

furnished with taste, and a dignified clergyman with his *wife* and maiden daughter were the last who occupied them. I had some knowledge of the colonel, who was ever looked upon as a man of honour. His relict I never saw before. I think she has a masculine air, and is a *little forbidding at first*; but when I saw her behaviour to two agreeable maiden gentlewomen, her husband's nieces, whom, for that reason, she calls doubly hers, and heard their praises of her, I could impute her very bulk to good humour; since we seldom see your sour peevish people plump. She lives respectably, and is, as I find, aforehand in the world.

"The widow consents that you shall take them for a month only, and such of them as you please. The terms, she says, she will not fall out upon, when she knows what your lady expects, and what her servants are to do, or yours will undertake; for she observed that servants are generally worse to deal with than their masters or mistresses.

"The lady may board or not, as she pleases.

"As we *suppose you married*, but that you have reason, from family differences, to keep it private for the present, I thought it not amiss to hint as much to the widow, but as uncertainty, however, and asked her, if she could, in that case, accommodate you and your servants, as well as the lady and hers. She said she could; and wished, by all means, it were to be so; since the circumstance of a person's being single, if not as well recommended as this lady, was one of her usual exceptions.

"I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

"THOS. DOLEMAN."

* * * *

Mr. Lovelace has just now given me five guineas for my faithful Hannah. I send them enclosed. Be so good as to have them conveyed to her; and let her know from whom they came.

He has obliged me much by this little mark of his considerateness. Indeed I have had the better opinion of him ever since he proposed her return to me.

* * * *

But, my dear, lest anything should happen to overcloud my prospects (which at present are more promising than they have been since I quitted Harlowe Place), I will snatch the opportunity to subscribe myself

Your not unhoping, and

Ever-obliged Friend

C. H.

(Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.)

Thou knowest the widow; thou knowest her nieces; thou knowest her lodgings; and didst thou ever read a letter more artfully couched than this of Tom Doleman's?

Who could forbear smiling to see my charmer, *like a farcical dean and chapter*, choose what was before her, and sagaciously pondering upon the different proposals, as if she would make me believe she had a mind to *some* other; the dear sly rogue looking upon me too with a view to discover some emotion in me. Emotions I had, but they lay deeper than her eye could reach, though it had been a sunbeam!

* * * *

But, Belford, didst thou mind that sly rogue Doleman's naming *Dover Street* for the widow's place of abode! What dost think could be meant by that? Not to puzzle thee about it, suppose the *widow Sinclair's in Dover Street* should be inquired after by some officious person, in order to come at characters (Miss Howe is as *sly* as the devil, and as *busy* to the full); and neither such a name, nor such a house, can be found in that street, nor a house to answer the description; then will not the keenest hunter in England be at fault?

But how wilt thou do, thou askest, to hinder the lady from mistrusting thee the more on that account, when she finds it out to be in another street?

Never mind that. Either I shall have a way for it, or we shall understand one another by that time.

I shall make good use of the Doleman hint of *being married*, but not till I have thoroughly digested that plot.

Widow Sinclair didst thou not say, Lovelace?

Ay, Jack!

Thou wouldst wonder to know one half of my providences. To give thee but one, know that I have already sent up a list of books to be procured *second hand* for the lady's closet. Thou knowest that *the women there are well read*.*

R. LOVELACE.

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

April 19th.

I HAVE a piece of intelligence to give, which concerns you much to know.

* Lovelace would have Clarissa believe these books were read by "the women."—ED.

Your brother having been assured that you are not married, has taken a resolution to find you out, and carry you off. A friend of his, a captain of a ship, undertakes to get you on ship-board, and to sail with you to Hull or Leith, in the way to one of your brother's houses.

This is early news. Miss Bell told it in confidence to Miss Lloyd, who is at present her favourite, though as much your admirer as ever. Miss Lloyd being very apprehensive of the mischief which might follow, told it to me, with leave to apprise you privately of it. And yet neither she nor I would be sorry perhaps, if Lovelace were to be fairly hanged—that is to say if *you*, my dear, had no objection to it. But we cannot bear that such an admirable creature should be made the tennis-ball of two violent spirits—much less that you should be seized and exposed to brutal treatment.

If you can engage Mr. Lovelace to keep his temper, I think you should acquaint him with it, but do not mention Miss Lloyd. Perhaps his wicked agent may come at the intelligence and reveal it to him.

Your Hannah is very thankful for your kind present.

Permit me, I beseech you, before you go to London, to send you forty-eight guineas. You know that I cannot want the money. I told you that I have near double that sum, and that the half of it is more than my mother knows I am mistress of. You don't know what occasion you may have for it.

Your faithful

A. H.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

April 21st.

AND now, Belford, what wilt thou say? I had like to have singed the silken wings of my liberty.

I offered myself to her acceptance with a suddenness, 'tis true, that gave her no time for reserves.

I never beheld so sweet a confusion. Her look, now so charmingly silly, then so sweetly significant, till at last the lovely teaser, out of all power of articulate speech, burst into tears, and was turning from me with precipitation, when, presuming to fold her in my arms, "Oh, think not, best beloved of my heart," said I, "that this motion proceeds from a design to avail myself of the cruelty of your relations. If I have disobliged you by it, it shall be my utmost care for the future."

There I stopped.

Then she spoke, but with vexation.

"I am—I am *very* unhappy," tears trickling down her crimson cheeks, and her sweet face, as my arms still encircled the finest waist in the world, sinking upon my shoulder.

Then recovering herself, and her usual reserve, and struggling to free herself from my arms, "How now, sir," said she, with a cheek indignantly glowing, and eyes of a fierce lustre.

I gave way to her struggle, but absolutely overcome by so charming a display of innocent confusion, I caught hold of her hand as she was flying from me, and kneeling at her feet—"O my angel," said I, hardly knowing the tenor of my speech,—and had a parson been there I had certainly been a gone man, "receive the vows of your faithful Lovelace. Make him yours, and only yours, for ever. Oh, be mine, I beseech you—thus on my knees I beseech you to be mine for ever!"

Was the devil in me? I no more intended this ecstatic nonsense, than I thought the same moment of flying in the air.

Well, what was the result of this involuntary impulse on my part? Wouldst thou not think I was taken at my offer?

No such thing, the pretty trifler let me off as easily as I could wish.

Her brother's threats and their possible results, the difficulty of a reconciliation with her family, all was pleaded as an excuse against a marriage with me, or rather that marriage was to be a *mere refuge*.

* * * *

I re-urged her to make me happy, but I was to be postponed until her cousin Morden's arrival. On him were now placed all her hopes!

I raved, but to no purpose.

But oh, the charming creature, again of herself to mention London!

R. LOVELACE.

(Mr. Belford to Mr. Lovelace.)

April 21st.

THOU, Lovelace, hast been long the entertainer, I the entertained. Nor have I animadverted, as thou wentest along, upon thy inventions and their tendency. For I believed, that with all thy airs, the unequalled perfections of this lady would be her security. But now that I find thou hast

induced her to come to town, and to choose her lodgings in such a house, I cannot help writing in her behalf.

My inducements to this are not owing to virtue; but if they were, what hope could I have of affecting thee?

What then is my motive? What, but the true friendship that I bear thee, Lovelace; which makes me plead *thy own sake*, and *thy family's sake*, in the justice thou owest to this incomparable creature, who well deserves to have *her sake* mentioned as the principal consideration.

Last time I was at M. Hall thy uncle so pressed me to persuade thee to enter the pale, that I could not help engaging myself on his side, the rather that thy own intentions with regard to this fine woman were then worthy of her. But now that the case is altered, let me press the matter home to thee from other considerations.

By what I have heard of this lady's perfections from every mouth, where wilt thou find such another?

* * * *

Were I in thy case, and preferred a woman, as I know thou dost this, to all others, I should dread to make further trial; especially if I doubted not, that if there were a virtuous woman in the world, it is she.

And let me tell thee, Lovelace, that in this lady's situation the trial is not fair. Consider the depth of thy plots and contrivances, all her relations' follies acting in concert with thy wicked scheming head; consider how destitute of protection she is, the house she is to be in, where she will be with thy *specious* creatures,—a young unexperienced lady wholly unacquainted with the town. Considering all these things, I say, what cause of triumph wilt thou have? Thou, too, a man born for intrigue, intrepid, remorseless, with no regard for his word to the sex, the lady incapable of art, and apt to believe well of others. It would be a miracle if she stood such snares as I see will be laid for her. . . . Besides, are not the pretences thou makest for further trial most ungrateful, upon the supposition of error in her, occasioned by her favour to thee?

* * * *

As thou art the last of thy name, as thy family is of note and figure in thy country; and as thou thyself thinkest that thou shalt one day marry, is it possible, let me ask thee, that thou canst have such another opportunity as thou now hast? A woman in her family and fortune worthy of thine own; so celebrated for beauty, and so noted for prudence, for *soul* (I will say, instead of *sense*), and for virtue?

Wicked as the world accounts you and me, we have not yet, it is to be hoped, got over all compunction. Although we find religion against us, we have not yet presumed to make a religion to suit our practices. We despise those who do, and we know better than to be *doubters*. In short, we believe in a future state of rewards and punishments. But having so much youth and health in hand, we hope to have time for repentance. That is to say, in plain English, we purpose to reform when we can sin no longer.

And shall this admirable woman suffer for her generous endeavours to set on foot thy reformation, and for insisting upon proofs of thy sincerity before she will be thine?

Upon the whole matter, let me wish thee to consider well what thou art about, before thou goest a step farther in the path thou hast chalked out for thyself. Be honest to her, then, in *her* sense of the word. None of thy companions, thou knowest, will offer to laugh at what thou dost. And if they should, on thy entering into a state which has been so much ridiculed by all of us, thou hast one advantage. It is this—that thou canst not be ashamed.

I suppose you will soon be in town. Without the lady, I hope. Farewell.

Be honest, and be happy.

J. BELFORD.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

April 22nd.

O MY best, my only friend! Now indeed is my heart broken! It has received a blow it never will recover. Think not of corresponding with a wretch who now seems absolutely devoted. How can it be otherwise, if a parent's curses have the weight I always attributed to them, and have heard so many instances in confirmation of that weight! Yes, my dear Miss Howe, superadded to all my afflictions, I have the consequences of a father's curse to struggle with! How shall I support this reflection?—my past and my present situation so much authorizing my apprehensions!

I have at last a letter from my unrelenting sister.

I enclose the copy.

“April 15th.

“SISTER THAT WAS,

“For I know not what name you are permitted, or choose to go by.

"You have filled us all with distraction. My father, on discovering your wicked elopement, imprecated, on his knees, a fearful curse upon you. Tremble at the recital of it!—No less than 'that you may meet your punishment both *here and hereafter*, by means of the very wretch in whom you have chosen to place your wicked confidence.'

"Your clothes will not be sent you. You seem, by leaving them behind, to have been secure of them whenever you demanded them.

"But does the wretch put you upon writing for your things, for fear you should be too expensive to him?

"Was there ever a giddier creature? Yet this is the celebrated, the dazzling Clarissa—Clarissa *what?* *Harlowe*, no doubt! And Harlowe it will be, to the disgrace of us all!

"Your drawings are all taken down, as is your own whole-length picture in the Vandyke taste, from your parlour. They are thrown into a closet, which will be nailed up, as if it were not a part of the house; for who can bear to see them? Yet how did they use to be shown to everybody! and this by those fond parents from whom you have run away with so *much*, yet with so little contrivance!

"Your books will not be sent you, your money neither, nor the jewels. For it is wished you may be seen a beggar in London streets.

"If all this is heavy, lay your hand to your heart, and ask why you have deserved it? Every man whom you once rejected—Mr. Solmes excepted—who, however, has reason to rejoice that he missed you, triumphs in your shameful elopement, and now knows how to account for his being refused—everybody, in short, is ashamed of you, but none more than

"ARABELLA HARLOWE."

(From Miss Howe to Miss Harlowe.)

BE comforted my best-beloved friend. God Almighty is just and gracious, and gives not his assent to rash, inhuman curses. Can you think that Heaven will seal to the black passions of its creatures? If it did, malice, envy, and revenge would triumph, and the best of the human race, blasted by the malignity of the worst, would be miserable in both worlds.

If you consider this malediction as you ought, you will rather pity and pray for your rash father than terrify yourself

on the occasion. None but God can curse . . . And has not he commanded us *to bless*, and curse not?

Pray for your father; since he has broken a command truly divine.

My mother blames them for this wicked letter of your sister, and of her own accord wished me to write to comfort you, for this once. For she says it is a pity your heart, when the sense of your fault and the weight of a parent's curse are so strong upon you, should be quite broken.

You will now see that you have nothing left but to marry as soon as you have opportunity. Determine so to do, my dear.

Do not dwell on the contents of your sister's *shocking* letter.

When things are at the worst they must mend. Don't let them break your heart, as they seem to be determined to do.

How spiteful to withhold your books, jewels, and money. I send fifty guineas by the bearer, enclosed in my Norris's miscellany. As you love me, return them not.

I have more at your service, so if you like not your lodgings when you get to town, leave them *out of hand*.

Write to Mr. Morden without delay. You will do well if he can come to England *at once*. But surely Lovelace will be infatuated if he secure not his happiness by your consent, before Mr. Morden's is made needful on his arrival.

Be comforted, my dear.

Your ever faithful

ANNA HOWE.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

April 26th.

YOUR letter, my beloved Miss Howe, gives me great comfort. How sweetly do I experience the truth of the wise man's observation, "that a faithful friend is the medicine of life!"

Your messenger finds me just setting out for London: the chaise at the door, and I have taken leave already of the good widow.

I received my sister's dreadful letter on Sunday, when Mr. Lovelace was out. He saw on his return my anguish and dejection; and he was told how much worse I had been. For I had fainted away more than once.

I think the contents of it have touched my head as well as my heart.

He would fain have seen it. But I would not permit that, because of the threatenings he would have found in it against himself. As it *was*, the effect it had upon me, made him break out into execrations and menaces. I was so ill, that he himself advised me to delay going to town on Monday, as I proposed to do.

He is extremely regardful and tender of me. All that you supposed would follow this violent letter, from him, has followed it. He has offered himself to my acceptance in so unreserved a manner, that I am concerned I have written so freely and so diffidently of him. Pray, my dearest friend, keep to yourself everything that may appear disreputable of him from me.

I must acquaint you, that his kind behaviour, and my low-spiritedness, co-operating with your former advice and my unhappy situation, made me that very Sunday evening *receive unreservedly his declarations*. And now, indeed, I am more in his power than ever.

Every one is waiting for me. Pardon me, my best, my kindest friend, that I return your Norris. In these more promising prospects, I cannot have occasion for your favour. Besides, I have some hope, that with my clothes they will send me the money I wrote for, although it is denied me in the letter. If they do not, and if I should have occasion, I can but signify my want to so

* * * *

My spirits sink on setting out.

Adieu, best beloved.

Pray for your C. H.

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

April 27th.

I AM sorry you sent back my Norris, but you must do as you please.

I am heartily rejoiced that your prospects are so much mended. What must the man have been had he not taken such a turn upon a letter so vile, himself principally the occasion of it?

But why did you not permit him to send for Lord M——'s chaplain? If punctilio only was in the way, and want of a license, and preparations and such like! My service to you, my dear!

Do not again, dear friend, declare your melancholy preference for a shroud when the matter you wish for is in your power.

It is a strange perverseness in human nature, that we slight that when near us, which at a distance we wish for.

You have one point to pursue—marriage. Leave the rest to Providence. You will have a handsome man, who would be *wise* if he were not vain, wild, and intriguing. But while the eyes of many of our sex are taken by so specious a form, and so brilliant a spirit, you must be content to stay till grey hairs and prudence enter upon the stage together.

I believe Mr. Hickman treads no crooked paths; but he hobbles most ungracefully in a straight one. Yet though he pleases not my eye, nor diverts my ear, he will not, I believe, disgust the one nor shock the other. Your swain will always keep up attention, you will always be alive with him, though perhaps more from fears than hopes; while Mr. Hickman will neither say anything to keep one awake, nor yet, by shocking adventures, make one's slumbers uneasy.

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I was going on in this style, but my mother broke in upon me, with a prohibitory aspect. "She gave me leave for one letter only." She had just parted with your odious uncle; and they have been in close conference.

She has vexed me. I must lay this by till I hear from you again, not knowing whither to send it.

Direct me to a *third place*, as I desired in my former.

A. HOWE.

(Extract from a letter of Lovelace's to Belford, accounting for Clarissa's sad condition after receiving her sister's letter.)

ABSENT when it came, on my return, I found her recovering from fits; half a dozen messengers dispatched to find me out. No wonder at her being so affected; she, whose filial piety gave her dreadful faith in a father's curses; and the curse of this gloomy tyrant extending to *both worlds*. O that it had turned, in the moment of its utterance, to a quinsy, and choked the old execrator!

What a miscreant had I been, not to have endeavoured to bring her back, by all the endearments, vows, and offers I could make her?

I *did* bring her back. I was earnest in my vows to marry; and my ardour to urge the present time was a *real* ardour.

But extreme dejection caused her to refuse me the *time*; for she has told me that now she must be wholly in my protection, *being destitute of every other!*

She has written Miss Howe an account of their barbarity; but not how very ill she was.

Very low she remains; dreading her stupid brother's enterprise, she wants to be in London, where, but for this accident, and for my persuasions, seeing her so very ill, she would have been this night. We shall set out on Wednesday morning, if she be not worse.

And now for a few words with thee.

Thou art apprehensive that the lady is in danger.

* * * *

I am not angry with thee, Jack. I love opposition. However, take thee this one piece of advice:—Ever be assured of being in the right when thou presumest to sit down and correct thy master.

Tuesday, April 25th.

ALL hands at work in preparation for London. What makes my heart beat so strong?

* * * *

The dear creature continues extremely low and dejected. Tender blossom! How unfit to contend with the rude and ruffling winds of passion, and haughty and insolent control! Never till now from under the wing, it is not enough to say, of indulging, but of admiring parents; the mother's bosom only fit to receive this charming flower!

This was the reflection, that, with mingled compassion and augmented love, arose to my mind, when I beheld the charmer reposing her lovely face upon the bosom of the widow Sorlings, from a recovered fit, as I entered, soon after she had received her execrable sister's letter. How lovely in her tears!—and as I entered, her lifted-up face significantly bespeaking my protection, as I thought. And can I be a villain to such an angel!

(Lovelace to Belford.)

April 26th.

At last my lucky star has directed us into the desired port, and we are safely landed.

In the midst of my exultation, something checks my joys. If it be not conscience, it is wondrously like what I thought it so many years ago.

My beloved is charmingly amended. Already have I given to every one her cue.

Among the rest, who dost thou think is to be her maid ?
—Deb. Butler.

Ah, Lovelace !

Ah, Belford ! It can't be otherwise. But what dost think Deb.'s name is to be ?—Why, Dorcas Wykes.

But here comes the widow with Dorcas in her hand, and I am to introduce them both to my fair one.

* * * *

So the honest girl is accepted. Of good parentage, but through neglected education she can neither write nor read writing. A kinswoman of Mrs. Sinclair could not therefore well be refused, the widow recommending her, and the wench only taken till Hannah can come. What an advantage has a forward nature over a courteous one !

Dorcas is neat in person and dress, her countenance not vulgar ; but I saw her lady took a dislike to her at her first appearance. Yet the girl behaved modestly—overdid it a little perhaps. But Dorcas will be excessively obliging, and win her lady's favour, I doubt not. I am secure in the wench's qualities.

The dear creature was no less shy when the widow first accosted her, yet I thought Doleman's letter had prepared her for her masculine appearance.

Why dost thou not wish me joy, Jack ?

R. LOVELACE.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

April 26th.

At length, my dear, I am in London. My lodgings are neatly furnished, but I like not much the old gentlewoman. Yet she seems obliging, and her kinswomen are genteel young people.

* * * *

Here I was broken in upon by Mr. Lovelace introducing the widow and a kinswoman of hers to attend me, if I approved of her, till my Hannah should come. She has one defect, she cannot write nor read writing, her education having been neglected ; but for discretion and fidelity she was not to be outdone by anybody. She commended her for skill at the needle.

As for her defect, I can easily forgive that. She is genteel—too genteel for a servant ; but what I like least of all in her

is her sly eye. I never saw such an eye. But Mrs. Sinclair herself (that is the widow's name) has an odd eye, and her respectfulness seems studied; but people can't help their looks, you know, and after all she is extremely obliging. As for the young woman, Dorcas, I accepted her, for how could I do otherwise in my present situation; but on their leaving us I told Mr. Lovelace that I desired this apartment might be considered my own place of retirement; that when I saw him it should be in the dining-room, which is upstairs, for this house having been once a double one, the rooms do not all communicate with each other. He withdrew respectfully to the door, but there stopped.

I see he has no mind to leave me if he can help it.

My approbation of his tender behaviour in the midst of my grief has given him a right, as he seems to think, of addressing me with the freedom of an approved lover.

* * * *

While we were talking at the door my new servant came with an invitation to tea. I said that *he* might accept of it if he pleased, but I desired him to make my excuses to the widow and inform her of my choice to be retired, yet to promise my attendance at breakfast in the morning.

* * * *

I have turned over the books I have found in my closet, and am not a little pleased with them, and think the better of the people of the house for their sakes.

In the blank leaves of the works of Nelson and Bishop Gauden is Mrs. Sinclair's name, and in the others Sarah Martin and Mary Horton, the two nieces.

* * * *

I am exceedingly out of humour with Mr. Lovelace, and have great reason to be so, as you will allow when you have read the conversation I am going to give you an account of. He began by letting me know that he had been to inquire the character of the widow, the more necessary as he supposed I would expect his frequent absence.

"I did," I said. "What is the result of your inquiry?"

"The widow's character was well enough, but as she lived by letting lodgings, and had others in the same house, which might be taken by an enemy, he knew no better way than to take them all unless I would remove to others."

It was easy to see he spoke the slighter of the widow to have a pretence to lodge here himself, and he frankly owned that if I chose to stay here he could not think of

leaving me for six hours together. He had prepared the widow to expect that we should be here only a few days, till we could fix ourselves in a house suitable to our condition.

"Fix *our* selves in a house, Mr. Lovelace! Pray in what light?"

"My dearest life, hear me with patience. I am afraid I have been too forward, as my friends in town, according to Mr. Doleman's letter, which you have seen, conclude me to be married."

"Surely, sir, you have not presumed——"

"Hear me, dearest creature. You have received with favour my addresses, yet by declining my fervent tender of myself at Mrs. Sorlings' you have given me apprehensions of delay. Your brother's schemes are not given up. Then I have taken care to give Mrs. Sinclair a reason why two apartments are necessary for us in our retirement."

I raved at him. I would have flung from him, yet where could I go?—the evening advanced.

"I am ashamed at you," I said. "You delight in crooked ways." I said I was not satisfied with the tale he had told, nor with the necessity of appearing what I was not."

Still he insisted upon the propriety of appearing to be married. "But since you dislike what I have said, let me implore you," he added, "to give a sanction to it by naming an early day,—would to heaven it were to-morrow!"

What could I say? I verily believe, had he urged me in a proper way, I should have consented to meet him at a more proper place than the parlour below.

* * * *

This I resolve, he shall not with my consent stay a single night under this roof.

Alas! my dear, how vain a thing to say!

* * * *

Mrs. Sinclair has just now left me. She came to ask how I liked my apartments, and to express concern that they could not have me at supper.

* * * *

Direct to me, Miss Letitia Beaumont, to be left till called for at Mr. Wilson's, Pall Mall.

C. H.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Thursday morning, 8 o'clock.

I AM more and more displeased with Mr. Lovelace for his boldness in hoping to make me, though but *passively*, testify to his untruth. And I shall like him still less for it, if it arise not from the hope of accelerating my resolution in his favour, by the difficulty it will lay me under as to my behaviour to him. He has sent me his compliments by Dorcas, with a request that I will permit him to attend me in the dining-room; but I have answered, that as I shall see him at breakfast-time I desire to be excused.

Ten o'clock.

I TRIED to adjust my countenance, before I went down, to an easier air than I had a heart, and was received with the highest tokens of respect by the widow and her two nieces. Agreeable young women enough in their persons, but they seemed to put on an air of reserve, while Mr. Lovelace was easy and free to all, as if he were of long acquaintance with them. Gracefully enough, I cannot but say,—an advantage which travelled gentlemen have over other people.

The widow, in the conversation we had after breakfast, gave us an account of the military merit of the colonel, her husband; and, upon this occasion, put her handkerchief to her eyes twice or thrice. She wished that I might never know the loss of a husband so dear to me as her beloved colonel was to her. And again she put her handkerchief to her eyes.

She moved me much in her favour, but with her nieces I never can be intimate—I don't know why. The widow directed all her talk to me as *Mrs. Lovelace*, and I, with a very ill grace, bore it.

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I asked after the nearest church, for I have been too long a stranger to sacred worship. They named St. James's, St. Anne's, and another in Bloomsbury; and the two nieces said they oftenest went to St. James's church, because of the good company, as well as for the excellent preaching.

Mr. Lovelace said the Royal Chapel was the place he oftenest went to, when in town. Little did I expect to hear he went to any place of devotion. I asked if the presence of the visible king of comparatively but a small territory did not take off, too generally, the requisite attention to the

service of the invisible King and Maker of a thousand worlds?

He believed this might be so with such as came for curiosity, when the royal family were present. But, otherwise, he had seen as many contrite faces at the Royal Chapel as anywhere else. And why not? since the people about courts have as deep scores to wipe off as any.

He spoke this with so much levity that I could not help saying that nobody questioned but he knew how to choose his company.

"Your servant, my dear," bowing, were his words to me; and, turning to the others, "you will observe, upon numberless occasions, ladies, as we are further acquainted, that my beloved never spares me upon these topics. But I admire her as much in her reproofs, as I am fond of her approbation."

Mr. Lovelace went on to say, that he must let the ladies into my story; and then they would know how to allow for my ways. "But, *my dear, as you love me,*" said the confident wretch, "give as little way to melancholy as possible. Be not angry, *my dear love,* for saying so"—seeing me frown, I suppose—he snatched my hand, and kissed it.

I left him with them, and retired to my closet and my pen.

Just as I have written thus far, I am interrupted by a message from him, that he is setting out on a journey, and desires to take my commands. So here I will leave off, to give him a meeting in the dining-room.

I was not displeased to see him in his riding-dress.

He seemed desirous to know how I liked the gentlewomen below. I told him that I wanted not any new acquaintance.

He took his leave of me in the most respectful manner, only kissing my hand. He left the bank note, unobserved by me, upon the table. You may be sure I shall give it him back at his return.

I am in much better humour with him than I was; and thus, my dear, am I brought to sit down satisfied with this man, where I find room to infer that he is not by nature a savage. "But how could a creature who, treating herself unpolitely, gave a man an opportunity to run away with her, expect to be treated by that man with a very high degree of politeness?"

[Mr. Lovelace in his next letter to Mr. Belford triumphs at making the lady yield to his wish that she should pass for his wife.]

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Friday, April 28th.

MR. LOVELACE has returned already. My brother's projects were his pretence. I could not but look upon this short absence as an evasion.

* * * *

"O, my dearest life," said he, "why will you banish me from your presence? I cannot leave you for so long a time as you seem to expect I should. I have been hovering about the suburbs of town ever since I left you. Edgeware was the furthest place I went to."

* * * *

"You may spare yourself the trouble of writing to any of your friends till the solemnity has passed that shall entitle me to give weight to your application. When they know we are married, your brother's plots will be at an end, and they must all be reconciled to you. Why then would you banish me from you? Why will you not give the man who has brought you into difficulties, and who so honourably wishes to extricate you from them, the happiness of doing so?"

But, my dear, although the opportunity was so inviting, he urged not for the *day*. Which is the *more extraordinary*, as he was so pressing for marriage before we came to town.

He was very earnest with me to give him, and four of his friends, my company on Monday evening, at a little collation. Miss Martin and Miss Horton cannot, he says, be there, being engaged in a party of their own, with two daughters of Colonel Solcombe, and two nieces of Sir Antony Holmes, upon an annual occasion. But Mrs. Sinclair will be present, and she gave him hope of the company of a young lady of very great fortune and merit, Miss Partington, an heiress, to whom Colonel Sinclair it seems, in his lifetime, was guardian, and who therefore calls Mrs. Sinclair mamma.

I desired to be excused. He had laid me, I said, under a most disagreeable necessity of appearing as a married person, and I would see as few people as possible who were to think so.

When he is set upon anything, there is no knowing, as I have said heretofore, what one *can* do. But I will not, if I can help it, be made a show of, especially to men of whom I have no good opinion.

Your ever affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

(Extract from a letter of Lovelace to Belford.)

Saturday night.

Most confoundedly alarmed! "Lord, sir, what do you think?" cried Dorcas; "my lady is resolved to go to church to-morrow!" I was at quadrille with the women below. "To church!" said I; and down I laid my cards. "To church!" repeated they, each looking upon the other. We had done playing for that night.

Who could have dreamt of such a whim as this? Without notice—without questions! Her clothes not come! No leave asked! Besides, she don't consider if she go to church I must go too! Yet not to ask for my company! Her brother ready to snap her up, as far as she knows! Known by her clothes—her person, her features—so distinguished! Not such another woman in England! To church of all places! "Is the devil in the girl?" said I, as soon as I could speak.

Well, but to leave this subject till to-morrow morning, I will now give you instructions for your and your companions' behaviour to-morrow night.

Instructions to be observed by John Belford, Richard Mowbray, Thomas Belton, and James Tourville, Esquires of the body to General Robert Lovelace, on their admission to the presence of his goddess.

YE must be sure to let it sink deep into your heavy heads, that there is no such lady in the world as Miss Clarissa Harlowe; and that she is neither more nor less than Mrs. Lovelace.

Be mindful also that your old mother's name is Sinclair; that her husband was a lieutenant-colonel, and all that *you*, Belford, know from honest Doleman's letter of her, that let your brethren know.

Mowbray and Tourville I allow to be acquainted with the widow and nieces from their knowledge of the colonel.

Miss Partington's history is this:—The daughter of Colonel Sinclair's brother-in-law: that brother-in-law may have been a Turkey merchant, or any merchant, who died confoundedly rich; the colonel one of her guardians, whence she always calls Mrs. Sinclair *mamma*; though not succeeding to the trust.

She has just come to pass a day or two, and then to return to her surviving guardian's at Barnet.

Miss Partington has suitors by the hundred (her grandmother an alderman's dowager, having left her a great additional fortune), and is not trusted out of her guardian's house without an old *gouvernante* noted for her discretion, except to her Mamma Sinclair, with whom, now and then, she is permitted to be for a week together.

Be it principally thy part, Jack, who aimest at wisdom, to keep thy brother varlets from blundering; for, as thou must have observed from what I have written, we have the most watchful and most penetrating lady in the world to deal with. A lady worth deceiving! But whose eyes will pierce to the bottom of your shallow souls. Do thou therefore place thyself between Mowbray and Tourville; thy elbows to be the ministers of approbation.

But here comes the pith of the business:—No less than four worthy gentlemen of fortune and family, were all in company such a night particularly, at a collation to which they were invited by Robert Lovelace, of Sandown Hall, in the county of Lancaster, Esquire, in company with Magdalen Sinclair, widow, and Priscilla Partington, spinster, and the lady complainant—when the said Robert Lovelace addressed himself to the said lady, on a multitude of occasions, as *his* wife, as they and others did, as Mrs. Lovelace; every one complimenting and congratulating her upon her nuptials; and that she received such their compliments with no other visible displeasure than such as a young bride, full of pretty confusion, might be supposed to express upon such contemplative revolvings as those compliments would naturally inspire. Nor do thou rave at me, Jack, nor rebel. Dost think I brought the dear creature hither for nothing?

And here's a faint sketch of my plot. Stand by, varlets—Tanta-ra-ra-ra! Veil your bonnets, and confess your master!

R. LOVELACE.

(Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.)

Sunday.

HAVE been at church, Jack. Behaved admirably well too! My charmer is pleased with me now, for I was exceedingly attentive to the discourse. Eyes did not wander. How could they, when the loveliest object in the church was in my view?

Dear creature! how fervent, how amiable in her devotions! I have got her to own *that she prayed for me*.

But let me tell thee what passed between us on my first visit this morning.

"Going abroad, madam?"

"Yes, sir, I intend to go to church."

"I hope I shall have the honour to attend you."

No, she designed to take a chair. This startled me. I said I should take it as a favour if I were permitted to attend her in a coach to St. Paul's.

She objected to the gaiety of my dress.

At last she permitted me the honour.

* * * *

The subject of the discourse was particular enough; it was about a prophet's story of a ewe lamb taken by a rich man from a poor one, who dearly loved it, and whose only comfort it was. These women, Jack, have been the occasion of all manner of mischief from the beginning! Now, when David, full of indignation, swore—King David would swear, Jack! the story is in the Bible—that the rich man should surely die; Nathan, which was the prophet's name, cried out the words, *Thou art the man!* by my soul I thought the parson looked directly at me. And at that moment I cast my eye full on my ewe-lamb. But I must tell thee, too, that I thought a good deal of my rosebud. A better man than King David, in that point, however, thought I!

When we came home, I showed my charmer my attention to the discourse, by letting her know where the doctor made the most of his subject, and where it might have been touched to greater advantage, for it is really a very affecting story. And this I did in such a way, that she seemed more and more pleased with me; and I have no doubt, that I shall get her to favour me to-morrow night with her company at my collation.

R. LOVELACE.

Sunday evening.

ADIEU varlets four. At six on Monday evening I expect ye all.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Sunday evening.

I AM still well pleased with Mr. Lovelace's behaviour. We have had a good deal of serious discourse together. He confesses how much he is pleased with this day, and hopes for many such. Nevertheless, he ingeniously warned me that his unlucky vivacity might return; but he doubted not that he should be fixed at last by my example and conversation.

He has given me an entertaining account of the four gentlemen he is to meet to-morrow night. Entertaining, I mean, for his humorous description of their persons, manners, &c.; but such a description as is far from being to their praise. Yet he seemed rather to design to divert my melancholy by it, than to degrade them. I think at bottom, my dear, that he must be a good-natured man, but that he was spoiled young for want of check or control.

I cannot but call this a happy day to the end of it. Indeed, my dear, I think I could prefer him to all the men I ever knew, were he but to be always what he has been this day. You see how ready I am to own all you have charged me with, when I find myself out. It is a difficult thing, I believe, sometimes, for a young creature that is able to deliberate with herself, to know when she loves, or when she hates. But I am resolved, as much as possible, to be determined both in my hatred and love by *actions*, as *they* make the man worthy or unworthy.

[She dates again on Monday, and declares herself highly displeased at Miss Partington's being introduced to her; and still more for being obliged to promise to be present at Mr. Lovelace's collation.]

(From the same to the same.)

Monday night, May 1st.

I HAVE just escaped from the very disagreeable company I was obliged, against my will, to be in. As a very particular relation of this evening's conversation would be painful to me, you must content yourself with what you shall be able to collect from the outlines, as I may call them, of the characters of the persons, assisted by the little histories Mr. Lovelace gave me of each yesterday.

The names of the gentlemen are Belton, Mowbray, Tourville, and Belford. These four, with Mrs. Sinclair, Miss Partington, the great heiress, Mr. Lovelace, and myself, made up the company.

Mr. Belford is the fourth gentleman, and one of whom Mr. Lovelace seems more fond than of any of the rest, for he is a man of tried bravery, it seems; and this pair of friends came acquainted upon occasion of a quarrel about a woman, which brought on a challenge and a meeting at Kensington Gravel-pits, which ended without unhappy consequences.

Mr. Belford, it seems, is about seven or eight-and-twenty. He is the youngest of the five, except Mr. Lovelace; and

they are perhaps the wickedest, for they seem to lead the other three as they please. Mr. Belford, as the others, dresses gaily, but has not those advantages of person, nor from his dress, which Mr. Lovelace is too proud of. He has, however, the appearance and air of a gentleman. He is well read, too, and, by his means, the conversation took now and then a more agreeable turn. I, who endeavoured to put the best face I could upon my situation, as I passed for Mrs. Lovelace with them, made shift to join in it, at such times, and received abundance of compliments from all the company, on the observations I made.

C. H.

Monday, midnight.

I AM very much vexed and disturbed at an odd incident.

Mrs. Sinclair has just now left me, I believe in displeasure, on my declining to comply with a request she made me, which was, to admit Miss Partington to a share in my bed, her house being crowded by her niece's guests and by their attendants, as well as by those of Miss Partington.

I told her that I was writing a long letter, that I should choose to write till I were sleepy, and that a companion would be a restraint upon me, and I upon her.

She was loth, she said, that so delicate a young creature and so great a fortune as Miss Partington, should be put to lie with Dorcas in a press-bed. She should be very sorry if she had asked an improper thing. She had never been so put to it before. And Miss P—— would stay up with *her*, till I had done writing.

Alarmed at this urgency, and it being easier to persist in a denial given than to give it at first, I said Miss Partington should be welcome to my whole bed, and I would retire into the dining-room, and there, locking myself in, write all the night.

The poor thing, she said, was afraid to lie alone. To be sure Miss Partington would not put me to such an inconvenience.

I was very busy, I said. I hoped to see the young lady in the morning, and account to her for my particularity.

Now, my dear, is not this a particular incident, either as I have made it or as it was designed?

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

May 2nd.

WITH infinite regret I am obliged to tell you I can write no longer to you. Your mother has sent me a letter enclosed in one from Lord M——, directed to Mr. Lovelace, forbidding me, if I thought not to intend making her and you unhappy, to write to you without your leave. This, therefore, is the last you will receive from me till happier days.

I repeat my prospects are not bad.

Your affectionate C. H.

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

May 3rd.

I AM astonished my mother should take such a step.

Mr. Hickman is of opinion I ought not to decline a correspondence thus circumstanced.

Continue to write to me. I insist upon it. I send this by a particular hand. I am and ever will be,

Yours, A. H.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

May 4th.

My dearest creature, would you incur a *maternal* male-diction?

* * * *

If I write, I must insist upon your forbearing to write. You can inform me in everything by Mr. Hickman's pen.

Yours ever obliged, C. H.

My clothes are brought to me just now. I have no heart to look into my trunks. A servant of Mr. Lovelace's carries this to Mr. Hickman.

May 5th.

[In which Mr. Hickman addresses himself to Clarissa to express "his resentments at her present state," offering his best and faithful services, and wishing her a happy deliverance from all her troubles.]

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Tuesday, May 2nd.

MERCURY, as the fabulist tells us, having the curiosity to know the estimation he stood in among mortals, descended in disguise, and in a statuary's shop cheapened a Jupiter, then a Juno, then one, then another, of the *Dii majores*, and at last asked, "What price that same statue of *Mercury* bore?" "O, sir," says the artist, "buy one of the others, and I'll throw you in that for nothing."

How sheepish must the god of thieves look upon this rebuff to his vanity!

So thou!—A thousand pounds wouldst thou give for the good opinion of this single lady. To be only thought tolerably of, and not quite unworthy of her conversation, would make thee happy. And at parting last night, or rather this morning, thou madest me promise a few lines to Edgeware, to let thee know what she thinks of thee, and of thy brethren.

Thy thousand pounds, Jack, is all thy own: for most heartily does she dislike ye all—thee as much as any of the rest.

Plainly, she said, she neither liked my companions, nor the house she was in.

I liked not the house any more than she; though the people were very obliging, and she had owned they were less exceptionable to herself than at first.

She did not like Miss Partington, let her fortune be what it would; and she had heard a great deal said of her fortune; she should not choose an intimacy with her. She thought it was a hardship to be put upon such a difficulty as on the preceding night, when there were lodgers in the front house whom they had reason to be freer with than, upon so short an acquaintance, with her.

I pretended to be an utter stranger as to this particular; and, when she explained herself upon it, condemned Mrs. Sinclair's request, and called it a confident one.

* * * *

And now, Jack, let me know what thy opinion, and the opinions of thy brother varlets, are of my Gloriana.

I have just now heard that Hannah hopes to be soon well enough to attend her young lady, when in London. It seems the girl has had no physician. I must send her one, out of pure love and respect to her mistress!

(Lovelace to Belford.)

(In continuation.) Tuesday, May 2nd.

JUST as I had sealed up the enclosed, comes a letter to my beloved, in a cover to me, directed to Lord M.'s. From whom, thinkest thou? From Mrs. Howe!

And what the contents?

How should I know.

* * * *

A very cruel letter I believe it is *by the effect it had upon her*. The tears ran down her cheeks as she read it, and her colour changed several times. No end of her persecutions, I think!

"What a cruelty in my fate!" said the sweet lamenter. "Now the *only* comfort of my life must be given up!"

Miss Howe's correspondence, no doubt!

I am not sorry for it. Now will she have nobody to compare notes with, nobody to alarm her; and I may be saved the guilt and obligation of inspecting a correspondence that has long made me uneasy.

How everything works for me! Why will this charming creature make such contrivances necessary? Why will she fight against her stars?

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Edgware, May 2nd.

WITHOUT staying for the promised letter from you to inform us what the lady says of *us*, I write to tell you, that we are all of *one* opinion with regard to *her*—which is, that there is not of her age a finer woman in the world, as to her understanding. As for her person, she is at the age of bloom, and an admirable creature; a perfect beauty.

Permit me, dear Lovelace, to be a means of saving this excellent creature from the dangers she hourly runs from the most plotting heart in the world.

I have done nothing but talk of her since I saw her.

Belton, Mowbray, and Tourville are all of my mind.

* * * *

And wouldst thou make her unhappy for life? Hitherto it is not too late. Be honest and marry. If thou dost not, thou wilt be the worst of men.

J. B.

Lovelace (*in continuation*).

I GUESS at thy principal motive in thy earnestness in behalf of this charming creature. I know that thou correspondest with Lord M., who has long been desirous to see me shackled. And thou wantest to make a merit with the uncle, with a view to one of his nieces! But knowest thou not, that *my consent* will be wanting to complete thy wishes? And what a commendation will it be of thee to such a girl as Charlotte, when I shall acquaint her with the affront thou puttest upon the whole sex, by asking, *Whether I think my reward, when I have subdued the most charming woman in the world, will be equal to my trouble?* Which, thinkest thou, a woman of spirit will soonest forgive, the varlet who can put such a question, or him who prefers the conquest of a fine woman to all the joys of life? Have I not known even a virtuous woman, as she would be thought, vow everlasting antipathy to a man who gave out that she was *too old for him*? And did not Essex's personal reflection on Queen Elizabeth, that she was *old and crooked*, contribute more to his ruin, than his treason?

* * * *

Well sayest thou, that mine is the *most plotting heart in the world*. Thou dost me honour; and I thank thee heartily.

* * * *

That she loves me, by no means appears clear to me. Were I to take thy stupid advice, and marry, what a figure should I make; and my perdition would be more certain were I to break, as I doubt I should, the most solemn vow I could make? I say, no man ought to take even a common oath, who thinks he cannot keep it. This is conscience! This is honour! And when I think I can keep the marriage-vow, then will it be time to marry.

Be convinced, then, that *I* (according to *our* principles) am right, *thou* wrong. But I *command thee to be convinced*. And in thy next be sure to tell me that thou art.

R. L.

(Mr. Belford to R. Lovelace.)

Edgeware, Thursday, May 4th.

I KNOW thou art so abandoned a man, that to give thee the best reasons in the world against what thou hast once resolved upon, will be but acting the madman whom once we saw trying to buffet down a hurricane with his hat. I hope,

however, that the lady's merit will still avail her with thee. But if thou persistest, if thou wilt avenge thyself on this sweet lamb, which thou hast singled out from a flock thou hatest, for the faults of the dogs who kept it; if thou art not to be moved by beauty, by learning, prudence, innocence, all shining out in one charming object; but she must fall by the man whom she has chosen for her protector; I would not for a thousand worlds have thy crime to answer for.

Oh, Lovelace, I conjure thee, if thou art a *man*, let not the specious devils thou hast brought her among be suffered to triumph over her, nor make her the victim of unmanly artifices.

J. BELFORD.

(Col. Morden* to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.)

[*Forwarded from Harlowe Place.*]

Florence, *April 13th.*

I AM extremely concerned to hear of a difference betwixt the rest of a family, so near and dear to me, and *you* still dearer to me than any of the rest:

My cousin James has acquainted me with the offers you have had, and with your refusals. I wonder not at either. Such charming promises at so early an age as when I left England. How much must you be admired! How few must be worthy of you!

Your parents, the most indulgent in the world, to a child the most deserving, have given way it seems to your refusal of several gentlemen. They have contented themselves at last to name one with earnestness to you because of the address of another whom they cannot approve.

I know very little of either of the gentlemen; but of Mr. Lovelace I wish I could say more to his advantage than I can. It cannot be thought that Miss Clarissa Harlowe will dispense with morals in a husband.

But as to what may be the consequence respecting a young lady of your talents, from the preference you are suspected to give to a libertine, I would have you, my dear cousin, consider. A mind so pure to mingle with one impure. Will not such a man perpetually fill you with anxieties for him

* Clarissa's trustee.

and for yourself? To be agreeable to him, and to hope to preserve an interest in his affections, you must probably be obliged to abandon all your own laudable pursuits. You must give up your own virtuous companions for his profligate ones, perhaps be forsaken by yours, because of the scandal he daily gives. Can you hope, cousin, with such a man as this to be long so good as you are?

Mr. Lovelace, I know, deserves to have an exception made in his favour; he is really a man both of parts and learning, and a fine person and generous turn of mind give him many advantages, but you need not be told that a libertine man of sense does infinitely more harm than one of weak parts.

A libertine, my dear cousin, a plotting, an intriguing libertine, must be generally remorseless—unjust he must always be. The noble rule of doing to others what he would have done to himself, is the first rule he breaks, and the oftener the greater his triumph. He has great contempt for your sex. Every woman who favours him confirms him in his wicked incredulity. He is always plotting to extend the mischiefs he delights in. How will a young lady of your delicacy bear with a man who makes a jest of his vows and who perhaps will break your spirit by the most unmanly insults? To be a libertine at setting out, all compunction, all humanity, must be overcome. To continue to be a libertine, is to continue to be everything vile and inhuman. Prayers, tears, and the most abject submission, are but fuel to his pride.

Weigh all these things, my beloved cousin, and if it be not the will of your parents that you should continue single, resolve to oblige them. Let it not be said that the powers of fancy shall, as in others of your sex, be too hard for your duty and prudence. The less agreeable the man, the more obliging the compliance.

I hope I shall soon, in person, congratulate you upon this your meritorious compliance. To settle and give up my trusteeship is one of the principal motives of my leaving these parts.

If on my arrival I find a happy union as formerly, in a family so dear to me, it will be an unspeakable pleasure to me, and I shall perhaps so dispose my affairs as in future to be near you.

I will add no more than that I am, with the greatest respect, my dearest cousin,

Your most affectionate

WM. MORDEN.

(Miss Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

May 7th.

I ENCLOSE my cousin Morden's letter . . .

To whom can I unbosom myself but to you? When the man who ought to be my protector, as he has brought upon me all my distresses, adds to my apprehensions; when I have not even a servant on whose fidelity I can rely, or to whom I can break my griefs as they arise, and when his bountiful temper and gay heart attach every one to him, and I am but a cipher to give him significance and myself pain? These griefs, therefore, do what I can, will sometimes burst into tears, and these will blot my paper. I know you will not grudge me the temporary relief.

I shall go on in the strain I left off with in my last, when I intended rather to apologize for my melancholy. But let what I have above written, once for all, be my apology. My misfortunes have given you a call to discharge the noblest offices of the friendship we have vowed to each other in advice and consolation, and it would be an injury to it, and to you, to suppose it needed even that call.

[She then tells Miss Howe, that now her clothes are come, Mr. Lovelace is continually teasing her to go abroad with him in a coach, attended by whom she pleases of her own sex, either for the air, or to the public diversions, but takes notice that he says not the least word of the solemnity which he so much pressed for before they came to town; and which, as she observes, was necessary to give propriety to his proposals.]

Now, my dear, she says, I cannot bear the life I live. I would be glad at my heart to be out of his reach. If I were, he should soon find the difference. If I must be humbled, it had better be by those to whom I owe duty than by him. My aunt writes that she dare not propose anything in my favour.

It is my duty to try all *probable* methods to restore the poor outcast to favour. And who knows but that once indulgent uncle, who has very great weight in the family, may be induced to interpose in my behalf? I will give up all right and title to my grandfather's devises and bequests with all my heart and soul to whom they please, in order to make my proposal palatable to my brother. And that my surrender may be effectual, I will engage never to marry.

What therefore I am thinking of is this: suppose Mr. Hickman, whose good character has gained him everybody's respect, should put himself in my uncle Harlowe's way.

And (as if from your knowledge of the state of things between Mr. Lovelace and me) assure him not only of the above particulars, but that I am under no obligations that shall hinder me from taking his directions.

I submit the whole to your discretion whether to pursue it at all, or in what manner. But if it *be* pursued, and if my uncle refuses to interest himself in my favour upon Mr. Hickman's application as from you, for so, for obvious reasons, it must be put, I can then have no hope. And my next step, in the mind I am in, shall be to throw myself into the protection of the ladies of his family.

Your unhappy

C. H.

[Mr. Lovelace, in his humorous way, gives his friends an account of the lady's peevishness and dejection on receiving a letter with her clothes. He regrets that he has lost all her confidence, which he attributes to his bringing her into the company of his companions.]

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(*In continuation of his letter.*)

At times I have confounded qualms with myself; but say not a word of them to the confraternity; nor laugh at me.

R. L.

This perverse lady keeps me at such distance, that I am sure something is going on between her and Miss Howe, notwithstanding the prohibition from Mrs. Howe to both: and as I have thought it some degree of merit in myself to punish others for their transgressions, I am of opinion that both these girls are punishable for their breach of parental injunctions.

And as to their letter-carrier, I have been inquiring into his way of living; and finding him to be a common poacher, a deer-stealer, and warren-robber, who, under pretence of higgling, deals with a set of customers who constantly take all he brings, whether fish, fowl, or venison, I hold myself justified (since Wilson's conveyance must at present be sacred) to have him stripped and robbed, and what money he has about him given to the poor; since, if I take not money as well as letters, I shall be suspected.

To serve one's self, and punish a villain at the same time, is serving public and private. The law was not made for such a man as me. And I *must* come at correspondence so disobediently carried on.

But, on second thoughts, if I could find out that the dear creature carried any of her letters in her pockets, I can get her to a play or to a concert, and she may have the misfortune to lose her pockets.

But how shall I find this out ; since her Dorcas knows no more of her dressing or undressing than her Lovelace ? For she is dressed for the day, before she appears even to her servant. Upon my soul, Jack, a suspicious temper is a punishable temper. If a woman suspects a rogue in an honest man, is it not enough to make the honest man who knows it, a rogue ?

But as to her pockets, I think my mind hankers after them, as the less mischievous attempt. But they cannot hold all the letters that I should wish to see.

[He then, in apprehension that something is meditating between the two ladies, or that something may be set on foot to get Miss Harlowe out of his hands, relates several of his contrivances, and boasts of his instructions given in writing to Dorcas and to his servant Will. Summers, and says, that he has provided against every possible accident, even to bring her back if she should escape, and refuse to return ; and hopes so to manage as to have a pretence to detain her.]

* * * *

[He then proceeds as follows :—

I have ordered Dorcas to cultivate by all means her lady's favour ; to lament her incapacity as to writing and reading, to show letters to her lady, as from pretended country relations, to beg her advice how to answer them, and to get them answered ; and to be always aiming at scrawling with a pen, lest inky fingers should give suspicion. I have, moreover, given the wench a pocket-book that she may make memoranda on occasion.

A master-key, which will open every lock in this chest, is put into Dorcas's hands, and she is to take care when she searches for papers, before she removes anything, to observe how it lies, that she may replace all to a hair. Sally and Polly can occasionally help to transcribe. Slow and sure, with such an Argus-eyed charmer, must be all my movements.

* * * *

Dorcas, who is ever attentive to all her lady's movements, has given me some instances of her *mistress's* precautions. She wafers her letters, it seems, in two places, pricks the wafers, and then seals upon them. No doubt but the same care is taken with regard to those brought to her; for she always examines the seals of the latter before she opens them.

I must—I must come at them. This difficulty augments my curiosity. Strange, so much as she writes, and at all hours, that not one sleepy or forgetful moment has offered in our favour.

* * * *

There are thousands who had rather fish in troubled waters than in smooth.

* * * *

I had been out. On my return, meeting Dorcas on the stairs—"Is your lady in her chamber, Dorcas?" "In the dining-room, sir; and if ever you hope for an opportunity to come at a letter, it must be now; for at her feet I saw one lie, which, as may be seen by its open folds, she has been reading, with a little parcel of others she is now busied with. All pulled out of her pocket, as I believe. So, sir, you'll know where to find them another time."

I was ready to leap for joy, and instantly resolved to bring forward an expedient which I had held in petto; and entering into the dining-room, with an air of transport I boldly clasped my arms about her as she sat, she huddling up her papers in her handkerchief all the time, the dropped paper unseen.

She was in a passion at the liberty I took. Bowing low, I begged her pardon; and stooping still lower, in the same movement, took up the letter and whipped it into my bosom.

* * * *

Up she flew in a moment. "Traitor! Judas!" her eyes flashing lightning, and a perturbation in her eager countenance, so charming!—"What have you taken up?"—And then, what for both my ears I dared not to have done to her, she made no scruple to seize the stolen letter, though in my bosom.

What was to be done on so palpable a detection?—I clasped her hand which had hold of the ravished paper between mine. "O my beloved creature!" said I, "can you think I have not some curiosity? Is it possible you can be thus

for ever employed; and I, loving narrative letter-writing above every other species of writing, and admiring your talent that way, should not, thus upon the dawn of my happiness, as I presume to hope, burn with a desire to be admitted into so sweet a correspondence?"

"Let go my hand!" stamping with her pretty foot. "How dare you, sir? At this rate, I see — too plainly I see"—and more she could not say; but, gasping, was ready to faint with passion and affright; not a bit of her accustomed gentleness to be seen in her charming face, or to be heard in her musical voice.

Having gone thus far, loth, very loth was I to lose my prize; once more I got hold of the letter! "Impudent man!" were her words, stamping again. "For God's sake," then it was. I let go my prize, lest she should faint away, but had the pleasure first to find my hand within both hers. She trying to open my reluctant fingers. How near was my heart at that moment to my hand, throbbing to my finger ends, to be thus familiarly, although angrily, treated by the charmer of my soul!

When she had got it in her possession, she flew to the door. I threw myself in her way, shut it, and, in the humblest manner, besought her to forgive me. And yet do you think the Harlowe-hearted charmer would do so? No truly, but pushing me rudely from the door, as if I had been nothing; she gaining that force through passion, which I had lost through fear, out she shot to her own apartment, and as soon as she entered, in a passion still, she double-bolted herself in.

I retreated to my apartment with my heart full, and, my man Will not being near me, gave myself a plaguy knock on the forehead with my double fist.

And now is my charmer shut up from me; refusing to see me; refusing her meals. She resolves *not*, she says, to see me again if she can help it.

Subscription is formal between us.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Tuesday, May 9th.

IF, my dear, you approve of the application to my uncle, I wish it may be made as soon as possible. We are quite out again. I have shut myself up from him. The offence in-

deed not *very* great—and yet it is too. He had like to have got a letter. One of yours. But never will I write again or reperuse my papers in an apartment where he can come. He did not read a line of it. So don't be uneasy.

Thus it was.

[She then gives Miss Howe an account of his coming in by surprise upon her; of his bold address; of her struggle with him for the letter, &c.]

And now, my dear, I am more and more convinced that I am too much in his power to make it prudent to stay with him. And if my friends *will* but give me hope, I will resolve to abandon him for ever.

But you must not, my dear, suppose my heart to be still a confederate with my eye. That deluded eye now clearly sees its fault, and the misled heart despises it for it. Hence it is that I can say, I think truly, that I would atone for my fault at any rate, even by the sacrifice of a limb or two, if that would do.

Adieu, my dearest friend! May your heart never know the hundredth part of the pain mine at present feels! prays

Your affectionate

CLARISSA.

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

May 10th.

I MUCH approve of your resolution to leave this wretch, if you can make up with your uncle.

I hate the man—most heartily do I hate him, for his teasing ways. The very reading of your account of them teases me almost as much as they can you. May you have encouragement to fly the foolish wretch!

I have other reasons to wish you may; for I have just made an acquaintance with one who knows a vast deal of his private history. The man is really a villain, my dear! an execrable one! if all be true that I have heard; and yet I am promised other particulars. I do assure you, my dear friend, that had he a dozen lives, he might have forfeited them all, and been dead *twenty crimes* ago.

I will have your uncle sounded, as you desire; and that out of hand. But yet I am afraid of the success; and this for several reasons. 'Tis hard to say what the sacrifice of

your estate would do with some people; and yet I must not, when it comes to the test, permit you to make it.

As your Hannah continues ill, I would advise you to try to attach Dorcas to your interest. Have you not been rather too shy of her?

I will add no more at present.

Your faithful

A. H.

(From Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

May 14th.

I HAVE not been able to avoid a short debate with Mr. Lovelace. I had ordered a coach to the door. When it was come, I went out of my chamber, but met him dressed on the stairs-head, with a book in his hand, but without his hat and sword. He asked with a respectful air if I were going abroad. I told him I was. He desired leave to attend me, if I were going to church. I refused him. And then he complained heavily of my treatment of him, and declared that he would not live such another week as the past for the world.

I owned to him that I had made an application to my friends, and that I was resolved to keep to myself till I knew the issue of it.

He coloured, and seemed surprised; but checked himself in something he was going to say." "This, madam," said he, "has been an unhappy week, for had I not stood upon such bad terms with you, you might have been now mistress of a house, and probably had my cousin Montague, if not Lady Betty, actually with you."

"And so, sir, taking all you say for granted, your cousin Montague cannot come to Mrs. Sinclair's. What, pray, is her objection to Mrs. Sinclair's? Is this house fit for me to live in a month or two, and not fit for any of your relations for a few days?" Then, pushing by him, I hurried downstairs.

He called to Dorcas to bring him his sword and hat; and, following me down into the passage, placed himself between me and the door, and again desired leave to attend me.

Mrs. Sinclair came out at that instant, and asked me if I did choose a dish of chocolate?

"I wish, Mrs. Sinclair," said I, "you would take this man in with you to your chocolate. I don't know whether I am at liberty to stir out without his leave or not."

Then, turning to him, I asked if he kept me there his prisoner?

Dorcas, just then bringing him his sword and hat, he opened the street door, and taking my reluctant hand, led me in a very obsequious manner, to the coach. People passing by stopped, stared, and whispered. But he is so graceful in his person and dress, that he generally takes every eye.

I was uneasy to be so gazed at; and he stepped in after me, and the coachman drove to St. Paul's.

He was very full of assiduities all the way, while I was as reserved as possible; and when I returned, dined, as I had done the greatest part of the week, by myself.

* * * *

Oh that I may have good tidings from my uncle!

Adieu, my dearest friend! This shall lie ready for an exchange, as I hope for one to-morrow from you, that will decide, as I may say, the destiny of

Your unhappy CLARISSA.

[Miss Howe endeavours to enlist Mrs. Norton as an advocate for Clarissa with the Harlowes; Mrs. Norton declines, sure of being unsuccessful.]

(Extracts from Miss Howe's letter to Clarissa.)

Sunday, May 14th.

How is it now, my dear, between you and Mr. Lovelace? I cannot tell, but wicked as the man is, I fear he must be your lord and master.

I had just heard of some of his vilenesses when I sat down to write, but on inquiry I found that they were committed some time ago.

His generous behaviour to the innkeeper's daughter is to his credit, to say nothing of his good character as a landlord.

When once married, I think you could not be very unhappy. The stake he has in the country, the care he takes of his affairs, nay, his pride in your merit, must be a security to you, I think.

Were you to leave him just now, with or without his consent, it would have an ill appearance. Yet his teasing ways are intolerable. His acquiescence with your slight delays, and to the distance you keep him, unaccountable.

Your uncle can believe everything bad of a creature who could run away with a man, and such an one as Lovelace. They expect application from you when some heavy distress has fallen. My dearest soul, resolve to assert your right. Claim your own, and go and live upon it.

It is evident to me that you must be his. The sooner you are so the better. Shall we suppose marriage is not in your power? I have not patience to suppose that.

Twice already have you, my dear, *modestied away* such opportunities as you ought not to have slipped. As to settlements, leave them to his justice, and there's an end of the matter.

Adieu, dearest friend,
A. H.

(Extracts from Clarissa's letter to Miss Howe.)

May 15th.

Now, my only friend, it is evident I have but one choice to make. I find I have carried my resentment to this man too far.

You say you have tried Mrs. Norton's weight with my mother. What is done cannot be remedied, but I wish you had not taken this step without consulting me. Forgive me, my dear.

He has sent for me, all impatience, as Dorcas says by his aspect, but I cannot see him.

Half an hour after he sent again, desiring earnestly I would admit him to supper. As he had heard I was fasting, if I would promise to eat some chicken which Mrs. Sinclair had ordered for his supper, he would acquiesce. *Very kind in his anger.*

I promised I would.
I hate myself.



May 16th.

IN this way we are now—a sort of calm. What may happen next with such a spirit as I have to deal with who can tell?

May 17th.

MR. LOVELACE would fain have engaged me last night, but I desired to be excused till this morning.

Accordingly at seven we met.

"My dearest love, are you well? Why look you so solemn?"

He asked me if I would name the happy day, and request the presence of Lord M. to be my father.

"Father had a sweet sound in it. I should be glad to have a father who would own me." Was not this plain speaking? "I'm but a very young creature, Mr. Lovelace," said I, and wiped my eyes and turned away my face; "so you must not wonder that the word *father* strikes so sensibly on my heart."

His emotion was visible.

He hesitated, as if contending with himself, stopped a moment, staring as usual in my downcast face.

"Would to heaven, my dearest life," added he, "that to-morrow might be the happiest day of my life. What say you to to-morrow?"

I was silent.

"Next day, then, madam;" in the same breath he went on, "or the day after that," and, taking my hands in his, he stared in my face. Would *you* have had patience with him, my dear?

"No," I said, calmly. You cannot think there can be no reason for such hurry.

"I am all obedience and resignation," returned the wretch.

When he would have *rewarded himself* for this self-supposed concession by a kiss, I repulsed him with disdain.

So much at present for Mr. Lovelace's proposals.

[Four letters written by Lovelace to Mr. Belford from the date of his last, giving the state of affairs between him and the lady, pretty much the same as in hers in the same period, allowing for the ill-humour in his, and for his resentments expressed with vehemence on her resolution to leave him, if her friends could be brought to be reconciled to her. From these we give a few extracts]:—

What might have become of me and of my projects had not her father and the rest of the implacables stood my friends?

[After violent threatenings of revenge, he says]:—

After her haughty treatment of me, I am resolved she shall speak out. There are a thousand beauties to be discovered in the face, in the accent, in the bush-beating hesitations of a woman who is earnest about a subject which she wants to introduce, yet knows not how. . . . How it will be with my charmer in this case. She will be about it, and about it, several times, but I will not understand her. At last, after half a dozen hem-ings, she will be obliged to speak out,—“I think,—Mr. Lovelace, I think, sir, I think you were saying some days ago”—still I will be all silence—her eyes fixed upon my shoe buckles, as I sit over against her. Ladies, when put to it thus, always admire a man’s shoe buckles, or perhaps some particular beauties in the carpet—“I think you said that Mrs. Fretchville,”—then a crystal tear trickles down each crimson cheek, vexed to have her pride so little assisted.

Oh! the sweet confusion! Can I rob myself of so many conflicting beauties by the precipitate charmer-pitying folly, by which a *politer* man might be betrayed by his own tenderness—*unused* to female tears?

[He next mentions a rash expression, that she should be his, although his damnation were to be the purchase.]

At that instant I was checked in the very moment, and but just in time to save myself by the awe I was struck with on again casting my eye upon her terrified but lovely face, and feeling, as I thought, her spotless heart in every line of it.

O virtue, virtue! what is there in thee that can thus against his will affect the heart of a Lovelace? Whence these involuntary tremors, and fear of giving mortal offence? What art thou, that, acting in the breast of a feeble woman, canst strike so much awe into a spirit so intrepid! which

never before, no not in my first attempt, young as I then was, and frightened at my own boldness (till I found myself forgiven), had such an effect upon me.

* * * *

Her youth, her beauty, her artless innocence, and her manner, equally beyond comparison or description. But her indifference, Belford! That she could resolve to sacrifice me to the malice of my enemies, and carry on the design in so clandestine a manner—yet love her as I do to frenzy; revere her as I do to adoration! These were the recollections with which I fortified my recreant heart against her; and yet she has made a coward of me. I who never was a coward before.

R. LOVELACE.

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

Thursday, May 18th.

I HAVE neither time nor patience, my dear friend, to answer every material article in your last letters, just now received. Mr. Lovelace's proposals are all I like of him. And yet I think as you do, that he concludes them not with that warmth and earnestness which we might naturally have expected from him. Never in my life did I hear or read of so patient a man, with such a blessing in his reach. But the man is a fool, my dear, that's all.

However, since you are thrown upon a fool, marry the fool at the first opportunity; and though I doubt that this man will be the most ungovernable of fools, as all witty and vain fools are, take him as a punishment, since you cannot as a reward; in short, as one given to convince you that there is nothing but imperfection in this life.

I shall be impatient till I have your next.

Your ever affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

AND what must be the consequence of my beloved's behaviour to me?

All complaisance next time I was admitted to her presence.

Thursday we were very happy.

I kissed her charming hand; once her cheek so rapturously she could not help seeming angry.

About noon, she numbered the hours she had been

with me, and desired to be left to herself. I was loth to comply.

I dined out. Returning I pressed for her company to the play; she made objections; I got over these, and she consented to favour me.

Saturday.

We are preparing for the play.

* * * *

(Lovelace to Belford.)

I AM too much disturbed in my mind to think of anything but revenge; or I did intend to give thee an account of Miss Harlowe's observations on the play. *Miss Harlowe's*, I say. Thou knowest that I hate the name of Harlowe; and I am exceedingly out of humour with her, and with her saucy friend.

What's the matter now? thou'lt ask.

Matter enough; for while we were at the play, Dorcas, who had her orders, and a key to her lady's chamber, as well as a master-key to her drawers and mahogany chest, closet-key, and all, found means to come at some of Miss Howe's last written letters.

Dorcas no sooner found them than she and Sally employed themselves in making extracts from these cursed letters, according to direction, for my use.

Cursed I may well call them. Such abuses! Such virulence! Oh! this little fury, Miss Howe! Well might her saucy friend be so violent as she lately was, at my endeavouring to come at one of these letters.

I was sure that this fair one, at so early an age, eyes so sparkling, expectations therefore so lively, and hope so predominating, could not be absolutely, and from her own vigilance, so guarded and so apprehensive as I have found her to be.

Sparkling eyes, Jack, when the poetical tribe have said all they can for them, are an infallible sign of a rogue, or room for a rogue in the heart.

* * * *

I had resolved to begin a new course, and, if possible, to banish all jealousy from her heart; and yet I had no reason to be much troubled at her past suspicions; since, if a

woman will continue with a man whom she suspects, when she can get from him, or *thinks* she can, I am sure it is a very hopeful sign.

* * * *

She is gone. Slipped down before I was aware. She had ordered a chair on purpose to exclude my personal attendance. But I had taken proper precautions. Will attend her by consent.

I had used all my arts to dissuade her from going at all, unless she allowed me to attend her; but I was answered with her usual saucy smartness, that if there were no cause of fear of being met with at the playhouse, when there were but *two* playhouses, surely there was less at church, when there were so *many* churches. The chairmen were ordered to carry her to St. James's church.

* * * *

I have come at the letter brought her from Miss Howe to-day. Plot, conjuration, sorcery, witchcraft, all going forward! I shall not be able to see this Miss Howe with patience.

* * * *

She is returned—refuses to admit me. Dorcas believes her denial is on the score of piety, as if there was impiety in seeing me, Jack. But I hate her—hate her heartily! She is old, ugly, and deformed. Oh, the blasphemy! Yet she is a Harlowe, and I *can* hate her.

R. L.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Sunday morning, 7 o'clock.

I was at the play last night with Mr. Lovelace and Miss Horton. It is, you know, a deep and most affecting tragedy in the reading.

His behaviour, however, on this occasion, and on our return, was unexceptionable; only that he would oblige me to stay to supper with the women below, when we came back, and to sit up till one o'clock this morning. I was resolved to be even with him.

To have the better excuse to avoid his teasing, I am ready dressed to go to church. I will go only to St. James's, and in a *chair*; that I may go out and come in when I please, without being intruded upon by him.

Near 9 o'clock.

I HAVE your letter of yesterday. He knows I have. I shall expect that he will be inquisitive next time I see him.

He is very importunate to see me. He has desired to attend me to church. He is angry that I have declined to breakfast with him. I am sure that I should not have been at my own liberty if I had. I bid Dorcas tell him that I desired to have this day to myself. I would see him in the morning as early as he pleased. She says she knows not what ails him, but that he is out of humour with everybody.

[As the lady could not know what Mr. Lovelace's designs were, nor the cause of his ill-humour, it will not be improper to pursue the subject from his letter to Belford.]

(Extract.)

"'Tis hard," answered the fair Perverse, "that I am to be so little my own mistress. I will meet you in the dining-room half an hour hence."

I went down to wait that half-hour. And never had paralytic so little command of himself as I had, while I walked about the dining-room, attending her motions.

With an erect mien she entered, her face averted. O Jack! that sullenness and reserve should add to the charms of this haughty maid! But in every attitude, in every humour, in every gesture, is beauty beautiful. By her averted face and indignant aspect, I saw the dear insolent was disposed to be angry. But by the fierceness of mine, as my trembling hands seized hers, I soon made fear her predominant passion. And yet the moment I beheld her, my heart was fairly cowed; and my reverence for the purity so visible in her whole deportment again took place. Surely, Belford, this is an angel.

"In what light, madam," I exclaimed, seizing her hand, "in what light, let me ask you, do I stand that I should deserve this haughty treatment of you?"

"In what light, Mr. Lovelace!" said she, visibly terrified; "In no bad light, I hope. Pray, Mr. Lovelace, do not grasp my hands so hard," endeavouring to withdraw them. "Pray let me go."

"You *hate* me, madam."

"I hate nobody, sir."

"You *hate* me, madam," repeated I. And I clasped one arm about her.

She struggled to disengage herself. "Pray, Mr. Lovelace, let me withdraw. I know not why this is. I know not what I have done to offend you. I see you are come with a design to quarrel with me. I will hear all you have to say to-morrow morning. I beseech you, if you have any value for me, permit me to withdraw."

I conducted her to the door, and left her there. But instead of going down to the women, I went into my own chamber, and locked myself in; ashamed of being awed by her majestic loveliness, notwithstanding I had such just provocations from the letters of her saucy friend, founded on her own representations of facts and situations between herself and me.

(Lovelace in continuation.)

May 22nd.

No generosity in this lady. Wouldst thou not have thought that after I had permitted her to withdraw, she would have met me next morning with one of her best curtsseys? No such thing, Jack! . . . I was in the dining-room before six, expecting her, and thus fooled away my time till eight, when I was astonished to see her enter dressed, her gloves and fan in her hand; and bidding Dorcas get her a chair at the door.

I looked cursed silly, I am sure.

"You will breakfast first, I hope, madam." I had a hundred tender-hooks in my heart.

"Yes," she would drink one dish; and then laid her gloves and fan in the window just by.

I was disconcerted. I hemmed, and knew not in what key to speak. Who's modest now, thought I! How a tyrant of a woman confounds a bashful man!

At last, I *will* begin, thought I.

She taking a dish of tea, and I also.

Sip! her eyes her own, she; like a haughty and imperious sovereign, conscious of dignity, every look a favour.

Sip, like her vassal, I; lips and hands trembling, and not knowing that I sipped or tasted.

"I was—I was"—I sipped—(drawing in my breath and the tea together, though I scalded my mouth with it),—"I was in hopes, madam——"

Dorcas came in just then. "Dorcas," said she, "is a chair gone for?"

D——d impertinence, thought I, thus to put me out in my speech! And I was forced to wait for the servant's answer to the insolent mistress's question.

"William is gone for one, madam."

This cost me a minute's silence before I could begin again. And then it was with my hopes,—and my hopes,—that I should have been early admitted to——

"What weather is it, Dorcas?" said she, as regardless of me as if I had not been present.

"A little lowering, madam. The sun is gone in. It was fine half an hour ago."

I had no patience. Up I rose. Down went the teacup, saucer and all. Confound the weather, the sunshine! "Begone, Dorcas, when I am speaking to your lady, and have so little opportunity given me."

Up rose the saucy-face, half-frighted, and snatched from the window her gloves and fan.

"You must not go, madam!" seizing her hand. "By —, you *shall* not. Such determined scorn—I cannot bear it."

"Detain me not," she cried, struggling. "I like not your ways—you are an ungrateful man—I hate you heartily, Mr. Lovelace."

* * * *

She would have flung from me: "I will *not* be detained, Mr. Lovelace. I *will* go out."

"Indeed you must not, madam, in this humour." And I placed myself between her and the door. And then, fanning, she threw herself into a chair, her sweet face all crimsoned over with passion.

I cast myself at her feet. "Begone, Mr. Lovelace," said she, with a rejecting motion, her fan in her hand; "for your own sake leave me! My soul is above thee, man!" with both her hands pushing me from her! "Urge me not to tell thee how sincerely I think my soul above thee! Thou hast in mine, a proud, a too proud heart, to contend with. Leave me, and leave me for ever!"

Her air, her manner, her voice, were bewitchingly noble, though her words were so severe.

"Let me worship an angel," said I, "no woman. Forgive me, dearest creature! Creature if you be, forgive me! Pity my infirmities! Who is equal to my Clarissa?"

I trembled between admiration and love ; and wrapt my arms about her, as she sat. She tried to rise at the moment ; but my clasping her thus drew her down again ; and never was woman more affrighted.

Yet I had not at the moment any thought, but what reverence inspired, and till she had actually withdrawn, which I permitted under promise of a speedy return and a dismissal of the sedan chair, all the motions of my heart were as pure as her own. She kept not her word.

Dorcas says, on entering the room, she still excessively trembled ; and ordered her to give her hartshorn and water.

* * * *

It is eleven o'clock. She will see me as soon as she can, she tells Polly Horton, who made her a tender visit, and to whom she is less reserved than to any one.

* * * *

At my repeated request she condescended to meet me to afternoon tea.

She entered in a pretty confusion ; sullen and slow she moved towards the tea-table.

Dorcas present, busy with the teacups. I took her reluctant hand, and pressed it to my lips. "Dearest, loveliest of creatures, why this displeasure ? How can you thus torture the faithfulest heart in the world ?"

She disengaged her hand. Again I would have snatched it.

"Be quiet," peevishly withdrawing it. And down she sat ; a gentle palpitation indicating mingled sullenness and resentment, a sweet flush overspreading her charming cheeks.

"For Heaven's sake, madam !" And a third time I would have taken her repulsing hand.

"And for the same sake, sir, no more teasing."

Dorcas retired. I drew my chair nearer hers, and with respectful tenderness took her hand ; told her that I could not forbear to express my apprehensions, that if any man in the world was more indifferent to her, to use no harsher a word, than another, it was the unhappy wretch before her.

She look steadily upon me for a moment, with her other hand, not withdrawing that I held, pulled her handkerchief out of her pocket, and with a tear in each sweet eye, which it was plain she would rather have dissipated, answered me only with a sigh and an averted face.

I urged her to speak, to look up at me, to bless me with an eye more favourable.

I had reason, she told me, for my complaint of her indifference. She saw nothing in my mind that was generous. My strange behaviour to her since Saturday night, *for no cause at all that she knew of*, convinced her of this. Whatever hopes she had conceived of me, were utterly dissipated. All my ways were distasteful to her.

This cut me to the heart.

"I was guilty," it seems, of going to church," said the indignant charmer, "and without the company of a man, whose choice it would not have been to go, had I not gone. I was guilty of desiring to have the whole Sunday to myself, after I had obliged you, against my will, at a play, and after you had detained me, equally to my dislike, to a very late hour over night."

* * * *

For this I was to be punished.

"I was to be compelled to see you, and to be terrified when I did see you, by the most shocking ill-humour that was ever shown to a creature in my circumstances. You have found fault with my father's temper, Mr. Lovelace. But the worst that he ever showed *after* marriage, was not in the least to be compared to what you have shown twenty times *before-hand*. And what are my prospects with you at the very best? My indignation rises against you, Mr. Lovelace," she proceeded, "when I recollect the many ungenerous instances of your behaviour to one whom you have brought into distress—and I can hardly bear you in my sight."

She turned from me, standing up; and lifting up her folded hands, and charming eyes swimming in tears. "O my father," said the inimitable creature, "you might have spared your heavy curse, had you known how I have been punished, ever since my swerving feet led me out of your garden-doors to meet this man." Then, sinking into her chair, a burst of passionate tears forced their way down her glowing cheeks.

"My dearest life," taking her folded hands in mine, "who can bear an invocation so affecting, though so passionate?"

By my soul, thought I, this sweet creature will at last undo me. And, as I hope to live, my nose tingled as it did when I was a boy, just before some tears came into my eyes—and at once on my knees renewed my vows.

"Rise, sir," said the angry fair one, "from your too ready knees, and mock me not."

"*Mock you, madam!*" And I arose, and re-urged her for the day.

"My day, sir," said she, "is never. But, indeed, Mr. Lovelace (and wept through impatience), you either know not how to treat with a mind of delicacy, notwithstanding your birth and education, or you are an ungrateful man—a *worse* than ungrateful one. But I will retire. I will see you again to-morrow. I think I hate you—you *may* look—indeed I think I hate you. And if upon a re-examination of my own heart, I find I do, I would not for the world that matters should go on farther between us."

But I see, I see, she does not hate me! How it would mortify my vanity, if I thought there was a woman in the world, much more this, that could *hate* me.

I was, however, too much vexed, disconcerted, mortified, to hinder her from retiring.

R. L.

(Lord M. to Robert Lovelace, Esq.)

Tuesday, May 23rd.

"It is a long lane that has no turning." Do not despise me for my proverbs; you know I was always fond of them, and if you had been so too, it would have been the better for you, let me tell you. I dare swear the fine lady you are so likely to be soon happy with will be far from despising them, for I am told that she writes well. God convert you! for nobody but He and this lady can.

I have no manner of doubt now but that you will marry, as your father, and all your ancestors, did before you. "No man is always a fool, every man sometimes." But your follies I hope, are now at an end.

I know you have vowed revenge against this fine lady's family. But no more of that now. You must look upon them all as your relations, and forgive and forget. And when they see you make a good husband and a good father (which Heaven send for all our sakes), they will wonder at their nonsensical antipathy, and beg your pardon. But while they think you a vile fellow, how can they either love you, or excuse their daughter?

And methinks I could wish to give a word of comfort to the lady, who, doubtless, must be under great fears, how she shall be able to hold in such a wild creature as you have hitherto been. I would hint to her, that, by strong arguments and gentle words, she may do anything with you; for

though you are too apt to be hot, gentle words will cool you, and bring you into the temper that is necessary for your cure.

* * * *

Pray let her know that I will present *her*, not you, with my Lancashire seat, or the Lawn, and settle a thousand pounds a year, penny rents, to show her that we are not a family to take any mean advantage.

If she would choose to have the knot tied among us, pray tell her that we shall see it securely done; and we will make all the country ring and blaze for a week together.

If anything further may be needful toward promoting your reciprocal felicity, let me know it. The enclosed bill is very much at your service. It is payable at sight, as whatever else you may have occasion for shall be.

So God bless you both, and make things as convenient to my gout as you can; though it be whenever it will, I will hobble to you, for I long to see you, and still more my niece.

Your most affectionate uncle,

M.

[This letter, read to Clarissa by Lovelace, with one from his cousin Miss Montague, both backed by fresh protestations from Lovelace, have considerable influence in softening Clarissa's heart towards her arch deceiver, who writes as follows to his friend Belford]:—

Friday evening.

Just returned from an airing with my charmer, complied with after great importunity. She was attended by the two nieces, they both top't their parts, and made moral reflections now and then. O Jack! what devils are women when we have ruined them!

The coach carried us to Highgate, Muswell Hill, and to Hampstead to the Upper Flask. There my beloved consented to alight, and take a little repast. Then home early by Kentish Town.

Delightfully easy she, and so respectful and obliging I, all the way, as we walked out upon the Heath to view the varied prospects which that agreeable elevation affords, that she promised to take now and then a little excursion with me. "I think, Miss Howe, I *think*," said I to myself, every now and then as we walked, "that thy wicked devices are superseded."

We have both been writing ever since we came home. I am to be favoured with her company for an hour, before she retires to rest.

All that obsequious love can suggest, in order to engage her tenderest sentiments for me against to-morrow's sickness, will I aim at when we meet. But at parting will complain of disorder.

* * * *

(*In continuation.*)

Cocoa Tree, *May*.

This ipecacuanha is a most disagreeable medicine. Two hours it held me.

We have met. All was love and unexceptionable respect on my part, ease and complaisance on hers. She was concerned at my disorder. So sudden! Just as we parted. But it was nothing. I should be quite well by morning.

* * * *

My beloved wonders she has not seen me this morning, no doubt, but is too shy to say she wonders. Repeated "What's the matter," however, as Dorcas runs up and down stairs by her door, bring on "Oh! madam! my master! my poor master!"

"What! How! When!" And all the monosyllables of surprise.

At last, "Bless me! let Mrs. Lovelace know." "There is danger, to be sure," whispered one to another; but at the door, and so loud, that my listening fair-one might hear.

Out she darts—"As how, Dorcas?"

"Oh, madam! a vomiting of blood."

Down she hastens, and in steps my charmer with a face of sweet concern.

"How do you, Mr. Lovelace?"

"O my best love! very well! very well! Nothing at all! Nothing of consequence! I shall be well in an instant."

In short, Belford, I have gained my end; I see that she loves me.

Every one now is sure that she loves me. Tears were in her eyes more than once for me. She suffered me to take her hand, and kiss it as often as I pleased. On Mrs. Sinclair's mentioning that I too much confined myself, she pressed me to take an airing; but obligingly desired me to be careful of

myself. Wished I would advise with a physician. *God made physicians*, she said.

I did not think that, Jack. God, indeed, made us all. But I fancy she meant *physic* instead of *physicians*.

I told her I was well already, on taking the styptic from her dear hands.

On her requiring me to take the air, I asked if I might have the honour of her company in a coach; and this that I might observe if she had an intention of going out in my absence.

"If she thought a chair were not a more proper vehicle for my case, she would with all her heart!"

"There's a precious!"

I kissed her hand again! She was all goodness! "Would to heaven I better deserved it," I said! But all were golden days before us. Her presence and generous concern had done everything. I was well. Nothing ailed me. But since my beloved will have it so, I'll take a little airing. Let a chair be called. O my charmer, all the art of healing is in your smiles! Your late displeasure was the only malady!

So far so good, Jack.

R. LOVELACE.

(Clarissa to Miss Harlowe.)

May 27th.

MR. LOVELACE, my dear, has been very ill. Suddenly taken, with a vomiting of blood in great quantities. Some vessel broken. He complained of disorder over-night. I was the more affected with it, *as I am afraid it was occasioned by the violent contentions between us*. But was I in fault?

How lately did I think I hated him! But hatred and anger, I see, are but temporary passions with me. One cannot, my dear, hate people in danger of death, or who are in distress or affliction. My heart, I find, is not proof against kindness, and acknowledgment of errors committed.

He took great care to have his illness concealed from me as long as he could. So tender in the violence of his disorder! So desirous to make the best of it! I wish he had not been ill in my sight. I was too much affected—everybody alarming me with his danger. The poor man, from such high health, so *suddenly* taken!—and so unprepared!

I am really very uneasy. For I have, I doubt, exposed myself to him, and to the women below. *They* indeed will excuse me, as they think us married. But if he be not generous, I shall have cause to regret this surprise ; which (as I had reason to think myself unaccountably treated by him) has taught me more than I knew of myself.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Wednesday, May 31st.

ALL still happier and happier. A very high honour done me : a chariot instead of a coach, permitted purposely to indulge me in the subject of subjects.

Our discourse in this sweet airing turned upon our future manner of life. The day is bashfully promised me. *Soon* was the answer to my repeated urgency. Our equipage, our servants, our liveries, were parts of the delightful subject. A desire that the wretch who had given me intelligence out of the family (honest Joseph Leman) might not be one of our menials ; and her resolution to have her faithful Hannah, whether recovered or not, were signified, and both as readily assented to.

Her wishes, from my attentive behaviour, when with her at St. Paul's, that I would often accompany her to divine service, were gently intimated, and as readily engaged for. I assured her that I ever had respected the clergy in a body, and that were not going to church an act of religion, I thought it (as I told thee once) a most agreeable sight to see rich and poor assembled once a week in one place, in best attire, to worship the God that made them. Nor could it be a hardship upon a man liberally educated, to make *one* on so solemn an occasion, and to hear the harangue of a man of letters—though far from being the principal part of the service, as is too generally looked upon to be—whose studies having taken a different turn from his own, he must always have something new to say.

She shook her head, and repeated the word *new* ; but looked as if willing to be satisfied for the present with this answer. To be sure, Jack, she means to do great despite to his Satanic majesty in her hopes of reforming me. No wonder therefore if he exerts himself to prevent her, and to be revenged. But how came this in ? I am ever of party against myself. One day, I fancy, I shall hate myself on recollecting what I am about at this instant. But I must stay till then. We must all of us do something to repent of.

The reconciliation prospect was enlarged upon. If her uncle Harlowe will but pave the way to it, and if it can be brought about, she shall be happy—happy, with a sigh, *as it is now possible she can be!*

She won't forbear, Jack!

Saturday, June 3rd.

JUST returned from Doctors' Commons. I have been endeavouring to get a license. Very true, Jack. I have the mortification to find a difficulty, as the lady is of rank and fortune, and as there is no consent of father or next friend, in obtaining this all-fettering instrument.

I made report of this difficulty. "It is very right," said she, "that such difficulties should be made." But not to a man of my known fortune, surely, Jack, though the woman were the daughter of a duke.

I asked, if she approved of the settlements? She said she had no objection to them. She had written to Miss Howe upon the subject, she owned; and to inform her of our present situation.*

* * * *

But never I believe was there so true a delicacy in the human mind as this lady's.

I have now at this instant wrought myself up, for the dozenth time, to a half resolution. A thousand agreeable things I have to say to her. She is in the dining-room. Just gone up. She always expects me when there.

* * * *

High displeasure—followed by an abrupt departure.

I sat down by her. I took both her hands in mine. I would have it so. All gentle my voice. Her father mentioned with respect; her mother with reverence; even her brother amicably spoken of. I never thought I could have wished so ardently, as I told her I did wish, for a reconciliation with her family.

A sweet and grateful flush then overspread her fair face; a gentle sigh now and then heaved her handkerchief.

I put one arm round her waist; I imprinted a kiss on her sweet lip. I drew aside her handkerchief.

* * * *

* As this letter of the lady to Miss Howe contains no new matter, but what may be collected from those of Mr. Lovelace, it is omitted.

I detained her reluctant hand. "Let me go," she said—"let me go, I tell you."

I was forced to obey.

* * * *

In vain have I urged by Dorcas for the promised favour of dining with her. She would not dine *at all*. She *could not*.

Come the worst, the hymeneal torch must be my *amende honorable*.

R. L.

(Extracts from a letter of Belford's to Lovelace.)

IF thou proceedest, I have no doubt that this affair will end tragically one way or other. It *must*.

What I most apprehend is, that with her own hand, in resentment of outrage, she, like another Lucretia, will assert the purity of her heart: or, if her piety preserve her from this violence, that wasting grief will soon put a period to her days. And in either case, will not the remembrance of thy ever-during guilt, and transitory triumph, be a torment of torments to thee?

'Tis a seriously sad thing, after all, that so fine a creature should have fallen into such remorseless hands. For, from thy cradle, as I have heard thee own, thou ever delightedst to sport with and torment the animal, whether bird or beast, that thou lovedst, and hadst a power over.

At first, indeed, when I was admitted into her presence, and till I saw her meaning air and heard her speak, I supposed that she had no very uncommon *judgment* to boast of, for I made, as I thought, but just allowances for her blossoming youth, and for that loveliness of person, and that ease and elegance in her dress, which I imagined must have taken up half her time and study to cultivate; and yet I had been prepared by thee to entertain a very high opinion of her sense and her reading. Her choice of this gay fellow upon such hazardous terms, thought I, is a confirmation that her wit wants that maturity which only years and experience can give it. Her knowledge, argued I to myself, must be all theory, and the complaisance ever consorting with an age so green and so gay will make so inexperienced a lady at least forbear to show herself disgusted at freedoms of discourse in which those present of her own sex and some of ours (so learned, so well-read, and so travelled), allow themselves.

Shouldst thou think that the melancholy spectacle hourly before me has made me more serious than usual, perhaps thou wilt not be mistaken, but nothing more is to be inferred from hence, were I even to return to my former courses, but that whenever the time of cool reflection comes, whether brought on by our own disasters or by those of others, we shall undoubtedly, if capable of thought, and if we have time for it, think in the same manner.

We neither of us are such fools as to disbelieve a futurity, or to think whatever be our practice, that we came hither by chance, and for no end but to do all the mischief we have it in our power to do. Nor am I ashamed to own that in the prayers which my poor uncle makes me read to him in the absence of a very good clergyman who attends him, I do not forget to put in a word or two for myself.

And here let me add, with regard to my poor old uncle, that I often wish thee present but for one half-hour in a day to see the dregs of a gay life running off into the most excruciating tortures, and to hear him bewail the dissoluteness of his past life in the bitterest anguish of a spirit every hour expecting to be called to its last account. Yet by all his confessions he has not to accuse himself in sixty-seven years of life of half the vile enormities which you and I have committed in the last seven only.

I conclude with recommending to your serious consideration all I have written, as proceeding from the heart and soul of

Your assured friend,

JOHN BELFORD.

(Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.)

Wednesday night, 11 o'clock.

FAITH, Jack, thou hadst half undone me with thy nonsense, though I would not own it in my yesterday's letter. But I think I am my own man again.

I will recede, I think.

* * * *

Soft, O virgin saint, and safe as soft be thy slumbers!

I will now once more turn to my friend Belford's letter. Thou shalt have fair play, my charmer! I will re-peruse what thy advocate has to say for thee. Weak arguments will do in the frame I am in—

But what, what's the matter? What a double—but the uproar abates—what a double coward am I, or is it that I am taken in a cowardly minute; for heroes have their fits of fear, cowards their brave moments.

But again the confusion is renewed.

What? Where? How came it?

Is my beloved safe?

O wake not too roughly my beloved.

*

*

*

*

June 8th.

And what dost thou think was the matter? I'll tell thee.

At a little after two, when the whole house was still, my Clarissa fast asleep, I was alarmed by a buzz of voices, some scolding, some little sort of screaming, and soon down ran Dorcas to my door, and in hoarse accents cried out "Fire, fire!" She the more alarmed me as I saw she endeavoured to cry louder, but could not.

My pen, its last scrawl a benediction on my beloved, dropped from my hands, and starting up, I made but three steps to the door, exclaiming, "Where, where?" almost as much terrified as the wench, while she, unable to speak, pointed upstairs.

I was there in a moment, and found all owing to the carelessness of Mrs. Sinclair's cook-maid, who had set fire to an old window-curtain.

She had had the presence of mind, however, to tear it down and thrust it into the chimney, where it was blazing when I went up, but all danger over.

Meantime Dorcas, after she had directed me upstairs, not knowing the worst was over, and expecting every minute the house would be in a blaze, out of tender regard for her lady (*I shall for ever love the wench for it*), ran to her door, and rapping loudly at it, in a recovered voice cried out, "Fire! fire! The house is on fire! Rise, madam—this instant rise—if you would not be burnt in your bed!"

No sooner had she made this dreadful outcry, but I heard her lady's door, with hasty violence, unbar, unbolt, unlock, and open, and my charmer's voice sounding like that of one going into a fit.

Thou mayest believe that I was greatly affected. I trembled with concern for her, and hastened down faster than the alarm

of fire had made me run up, in order to satisfy her that all the danger was over.

When I had flown down to her chamber-door, there I beheld the most charming creature in the world, supporting herself on the arm of the gasping Dorcas, sighing, trembling, ready to faint, and half-undressed, her feet just slipped into her shoes. As soon as she saw me she panted, and struggled to speak, but could only say, "O Mr. Lovelace!" and down was ready to sink.

I clasped her in my arms. "My dearest life! fear nothing. The danger is over; the fire is got under! And how, fool (to Dorcas), could you thus, by your hideous yell, alarm and frighten my angel!"

O Jack! how I could distinguish the dear heart flutter against my own as I held her, fearing she would go into fits.

Lifting her up, I endeavoured, with the utmost tenderness of action, as well as of expression, to dissipate her terrors.

But what did I get by this my generous care of her, and by my successful endeavours to bring her to herself? Nothing—ungrateful as she was—but the most passionate exclamations. . . Far from being affected, as I wished, by an address so fervent (although from a man for whom she had so lately owned a regard, and with whom, but an hour or two before, she had parted with so much satisfaction), I never saw a more moving grief, when she came fully to herself.

She appealed to Heaven against my *treachery*, as she called it, while I, by the most solemn vows, pleaded my own equal fright, and the reality of the danger that had alarmed us both. She did not believe one word, but conjured me, in the most solemn and affecting manner, by turns threatening and soothing, to quit her apartment, and permit her to hide herself from the light, and from every human eye.

I besought her pardon; yet could not avoid offending; and repeatedly vowed that the next morning's sun should witness our espousals. But taking, I suppose, all my protestations of this kind as an indication of evil, she would hear nothing that I said; but, redoubling her struggles to get free from me, in broken accents, and exclamations the most vehement, she protested that she would not survive what she called a treatment so disgraceful and villainous; and, looking all wildly round her, and espying a pair of sharp-pointed scissors on a chair by the bedside, she endeavoured to catch them up, with design to make her words good on the spot.

Seeing her desperation, I begged her to be pacified; that she would hear me speak but one word, declaring that I intended no wrong. And having seized the scissors, I threw them into the chimney, and she still insisting vehemently upon my distance, I permitted her to take a chair.

But, O the sweet discomposure!

* * * *

When I again would have cast my arms about her, to save her from fainting, I could not prevent her sliding through them to fall upon her knees—which she did at my feet. And there, in the anguish of her soul, her streaming eyes lifted up to my face with supplicating softness, hands folded, dishevelled hair—for her night head-dress having fallen off in her struggling, her charming tresses fell down in naturally shining ringlets, her bosom heaving with sighs and broken sobs, as if to aid her quivering lips in pleading for her. In this manner, but when her grief gave way to her speech, in words pronounced with that propriety which distinguishes this admirable creature from all the women I ever heard speak, did she implore my compassion and my honour.

“Consider me, *dear* Lovelace” (*dear* was her charming word), “on my knees I beg you to consider me as a poor creature who has no protector but you—who has no defence but your honour. By that honour—by your humanity—by all you have vowed—I conjure you not to make me abhor myself! not to make me vile in my own eyes!”

I mentioned the morrow as the happiest day of my life.

“Tell me not of to-morrow! If, indeed, you mean me honourably—*Now*—this very instant—NOW! You must show it, and be gone.”

* * * *

Wicked wretch! insolent villain! Yes, she called me insolent villain, although so much in my power! And for what? only for kissing her beautiful lips, her cheeks, her forehead, and her streaming eyes, as she continued kneeling at my feet as I sat.

“If I *am* a villain, madam”—and then my grasping but trembling hand—

* * * *

She tore my ruffles, and shrank from me with amazing force, as with my other arm I would have supported her.

. . . Again, I was her *dear* Lovelace. . . “Kill me, kill me!” she cried; “I am odious enough in your sight to

deserve this treatment; too long has my life been a burden to me." On looking wildly round her—"Give me but the means, and I will instantly convince you that my honour is dearer to me than my life!"

Then with folded hands and streaming eyes, again I was "her *blessed* Lovelace," and "she would thank me with her latest breath, if I would permit her to make that preference, or free her from further indignity."

I sat suspended for a moment. By my soul, I thought—'tis an angel, and no woman, this! and still, as I raised her to my heart in my encircling arms, she slid through them.

"Good God, that I should live to see this hour! See, Mr. Lovelace, at your feet, a poor creature imploring your pity, who, for your sake, is abandoned by all the world! Let not my father's curse be thus dreadfully fulfilled! But spare me, I beseech you, spare me! For how have I deserved this treatment from you? For *your own sake*, if not for *my sake*, and as you would that God Almighty in your last hour should have mercy upon *you*, spare me!"

What heart but must have been penetrated?

I would again have raised the dear suppliant from her knees; but she would not be raised, till my softened mind, she said, had yielded to her prayer, and bid her rise to be innocent.

"Rise then, my angel! Only pronounce me pardoned for what has passed, and tell me you will continue to look upon me with that eye of favour and serenity which I have been blessed with for some days past, and I will submit to my beloved conqueress, whose power never was at so great an height with me, as now."

"God Almighty," said she, "hear your prayers in your most arduous moments, as you have heard mine! And now, this moment, leave me to my own recollection. In *that* you will leave me to misery enough, and more than you ought to wish to your bitterest enemy."

"Impute not everything, my best beloved, to design; for design it was not."

"O Mr. Lovelace!"

"Upon my soul, madam, the fire was real" (*and so it was, Jack*). "The house, my dearest life, might have been consumed by it, as you will be convinced in the morning by ocular demonstration."

"O Mr. Lovelace!"

"Let my passion for you, madam——"

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"No more, no more! Leave me, I beseech you!" And, looking upon herself, and around her, in sweet confusion—"Begone! begone!"

* * * *

"Impossible, my dearest life, till you pronounce my pardon."

"I beseech you begone, that I may think what I *can* do, and what I ought to do."

I clasped her in my arms, hoping she would *not* forgive me.

* * * *

"I do—I do forgive you!"

"Heartily?"

"Heartily!"

"And freely?"

"Freely!"

"And will you look on me to-morrow as if nothing had passed?"

"Yes! yes!"

"I cannot take these peevish affirmatives, so much like negatives! Say you will, upon your honour."

"Upon my honour, then; O now, begone! begone! And never—never——"

"What, never, my angel! Is this forgiveness?"

"Never," said she, "let what has passed be remembered more!"

I insisted upon one kiss to seal my pardon, and retired like a woman's fool, as I was! Couldst thou have believed it?

But I had no sooner entered my own apartment, than reflecting upon the ridicule I should meet with below upon a weakness so much out of my usual character, I repented, and hastened back.

But I was justly punished, for her door was fast; and, hearing her sigh and sob as if her heart would burst, "My beloved creature," said I, rapping gently—her sobs ceasing—"I want but to say three words to you, which must be the most acceptable you ever heard from me. Let me see you but for one moment."

I thought I heard her coming to the door, and my heart leaped; but it was only to draw another bolt, to make it still faster; and she either could not or would not answer me, but retired to the further end of her apartment—to her closet probably. And, more like a fool than before, again I sneaked away.

I love her more than ever, and well I may ! . She would give the world, I fancy, to have the first interview over.

(Lovelace to Mr. Belford.)

Thursday morning, 8 o'clock.

HER chamber door has not yet been open. I must not expect she will breakfast with me. Nor dine with me, I doubt. A little silly soul, what troubles does she make to herself by her over-niceness ! All I have done would have been looked upon as a frolic only, and laughed off by nine parts in ten of the sex.

Soft and balmy I hope have been her slumbers, that she may meet me in tolerable temper.

* * * *

By my troth, Jack, I am half ashamed to see the women below. I have not yet opened my door, that I may not be obtruded upon.

Past Ten.

I never longed in my life for anything with so much impatience, as to see my charmer. She has been stirring these two hours.

Dorcas just now tapped at her door to take her morning commands.

"She had none for her," was the answer.

I will go myself.

* * * *

Three times tapped I at the door ; but no answer.

"Permit me, dearest creature, to inquire after your health," said I ; "I am impatient to know how you do."

Not a word of answer, but a deep sigh, even to sobbing.

"Let me beg of you, madam, to accompany me upstairs ; you'll rejoice to see what a happy escape we have all had."

A happy escape indeed, Jack ! For the fire had scorched the window-board, singed the hangings, and burnt through the slit deal lining of the window-jambs.

"No answer, madam ! Am I not worthy of one word ? Is it thus you keep your promise with me ? Shall I not have the favour of your company for two minutes,—only two minutes, in the dining-room ?"

"Hem !" and a deep sigh, were all the answer.

"Answer me how you do! Is this the forgiveness that was the condition of my obedience?"

Then, in a faintish but angry voice, "Begone from my door, wretch! inhuman, base, and treacherous! begone! Nor tease a poor creature entitled to protection.

"O the dreadful weight of a father's curse, thus in the very letter of it——"

And then her voice dying away in murmurs inarticulate, I looked through the keyhole, and saw her on her knees, her face, though not towards me, lifted up, as well as hands, and these folded, deprecating, I suppose, that gloomy tyrant's curse.

I could not help being moved.

"My dearest life! this once believe me! When you see the reality of the danger that gave occasion for this unhappy resentment, you will think less hardly of me. And let me beseech you to perform a promise on which I made reliance."

"I cannot see you! Would to heaven I never had. If I write, that's all I can do."

"Let your writing then, my dearest life, confirm your promise; and I will withdraw in expectation of it."

Past Eleven.

She rung her bell for Dorcas; and, with her door only half-opened, gave her a billet for me.

"How did the dear creature look, Dorcas?"

"She was dressed. She turned her face quite from me; and sighed, as if her heart would break."

"Sweet creature!" I kissed the wet paper with my breath.

These are the contents:—

"I cannot see you; nor will I, if I can help it. Words cannot express the anguish of my soul on your baseness and ingratitude.

"Vilest of men! and most detestable of plotters! how have I deserved from you such shocking indignities—but no more! Only for your own sake, wish not, at least for a week, to come to see *the undeservedly injured and insulted*

"CLARISSA HARLOWE."

So thou seest to what a pretty pass, nevertheless, have I brought myself! Had Cæsar been such a fool, he had never passed the Rubicon.

But not to see her for a week! Dear pretty soul! how she anticipates me in everything! The license with the parson, or the parson without the license, must be procured within the next four-and-twenty hours. Pritchard is as good as ready with his indentures tripartite; Tomlinson is at hand with a favourable answer from her uncle. *Yet not to see her for a week!* Dear sweet soul! Her good angel is gone a journey; is truanting at least. But nevertheless, in thy week's time, or in much less, my charmer, I doubt not to complete my triumph!

But what vexes me of all things is, that such an excellent creature should break her word. Fie, fie, upon her! But nobody is absolutely perfect! *'Tis human to err*, but *not to persevere*. I hope my charmer cannot be inhuman!

(Lovelace to Mr. Belford.)

King's Arms, Pall Mall, *Thursday, 2 o'clock.*

SEVERAL billets passed between us before I went out, by the *internunciship* of Dorcas: for which reason mine are superscribed with her married name.

(To Mrs. Lovelace.)

INDEED, my dearest life, you carry this matter too far.

If you step up, you will see that I am no *plotter* in this affair.

I beg your presence in the dining-room for a quarter of an hour.

Your penitent

LOVELACE.

(To Mr. Lovelace.)

I WILL not see you. The more I reflect upon your vileness the more I am exasperated.

Urge me no more.

C. H.

(To Mrs. Lovelace.)

FOR Heaven's sake, favour me with your presence for a few minutes; and I will leave you for the day.

I will go to the Commons and proceed as if I had not the misfortune to be under your displeasure.

I hope to find you in a kinder disposition on my return.

The settlements are ready to sign, or will be by night.

Your adoring

LOVELACE.

(*In continuation.*)

As I have no hope to be permitted to dine with you, I shall not return till evening; and then, I presume to say, I *expect* to find you disposed to bless, by your consent for to-morrow, *your adoring*

LOVELACE.

I looked through the keyhole at my going by her door, and saw her on her knees, at her bed's feet, her head and bosom on the bed, her arms extended; in an agony she seemed to be, sobbing as if her heart would break.

* * * *

Waiting here for Mowbray and Mallory, by whose aid I am to get the license.

* * * *

I am in a way to come at the wished-for license.
I am in hopes she will have better considered of everything.

(Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.)

Thursday evening, June 8th.

O how shall I give vent to my rage! Ruined! undone! outwitted! tricked! Zounds, man, the lady is gone off!—absolutely gone off!—escaped!

Thou knowest not, nor canst conceive the pangs that wring my heart! What can I do?

And thou, too, wilt but clap thy dragon's wings at the tidings!

Yet I must write, or I shall go distracted. Little less have I been these two hours; dispatching messengers to every stage, to every inn, to every waggon or coach, whether flying or creeping, and to every house with a bill up, for five miles round.

The little hypocrite, who knows not a soul in this town!

* * * *

Confound her contrivances . . . But, O Belford, what use denouncing them now?

* * * *

How she could effect her escape is my astonishment; the whole sisterhood having charge of her—for, as yet, I have not had patience enough to let a soul of them approach me.

Of this I am sure, there is not a creature belonging to this house that could be *corrupted* either by *virtue* or *remorse*.

'Tis well Will was out of my way when the cursed news was imparted to me! Gone, the villain! in quest of her; not to return, nor to see my face—so he declared—till he has heard some tidings of her.

* * * *

I have heard her story! Art, wicked, unpardonable art, in a woman of her character. But show me a woman, and I'll show thee a plotter!

This is the substance of the account:—

I had no sooner left the house, than Dorcas acquainted the siren with it; and that I had left word that I was gone to Doctors' Commons, and should be heard of for some hours at the "Horn" there, if inquired after by anybody; that afterwards I should be either at the "Cocoa Tree" or "King's Arms," and should not return till late. She then urged her to take some refreshments.

She was in tears when Dorcas approached her; her eyes swelled with weeping. She refused either to eat or drink; sighed as if her heart would break.—False, devilish grief!

Nevertheless, she ordered three or four French rolls, with a little butter, and a decanter of water; telling her she would dispense with her attendance; and that should be all she would live upon in the interim. So, artful creature! pretending to lay up for a week's siege.

Oh, how Miss Howe will triumph! But if that little fury receive her, fate shall make me rich amends.

* * * *

She was prevailed upon to go up, and look at the damage done by the fire; and seemed not only shocked at it, but satisfied it was no trick.

She sent Will with a letter to Wilson's, directed to Miss Howe, ordering him to inquire if there were not one for her there.

He only pretended to go, and brought word there was none, and put her letter in his pocket for me.

She then ordered him to carry another (which she gave him) to the "Horn Tavern," to me. All this done without any seeming hurry; yet she appeared to be very solemn, and put her handkerchief frequently to her eyes.

Will went out, pretending to bring the letter to me; but quickly returned.

It must have been in this little interval that she escaped; for soon after his return they made fast the street-door, Dorcas going up-stairs, and Will into the kitchen.

About half an hour after, Dorcas, who had planted herself where she could see her lady's door open, had the curiosity to go to look through the keyhole; and finding the key in the door, which was not usual, she tapped three or four times. Having no answer, opened it, with "Madam, did you call?"—supposing her in her closet.

She stepped forward, and was astonished to find she was not there; ran into the dining-room, then into my apartments; searched every closet; dreading all the time to behold some sad catastrophe.

The whole house was in an uproar in an instant.

* * * *

When they had searched the house ten times, they sent to all the porters, chairmen, and hackney-coachmen, that had been near the house for two hours, to inquire if any of them saw such a young lady, describing her.

This brought them some light. One of the chairmen gave them this account:—That he saw such a lady come out of the house a little before four (in a great hurry, and as if frightened), with a little parcel tied up in a handkerchief in her hand; that he took notice to his fellow, that she was a fine young lady; that she had either a bad husband or cross parents, for that her eyes seemed swelled with crying.

From these appearances, the fellow had the curiosity to follow her, unperceived. She often looked back. Everybody who passed her, turned to look after her; passing their verdict upon her tears, her hurry, and her charming person; till coming to a stand of coaches, a coach was accepted; the coachman opened the door in a hurry, seeing *her* hurry; and in she stumbled for haste.

The devil take me, Belford, if my heart is not moved for her, notwithstanding her wicked deceit. Afraid of being laid hold of by a Lovelace in every one she saw!—a stranger to the town and to all its ways; the afternoon far gone; but little money; and no clothes but those she had on!

The fellow heard her say, "Drive fast!—very fast!" "Where, madam?"—"To Holborn Bars," answered she; repeating, "Drive very fast!" And up she pulled both the windows; and he lost sight of the coach in a minute.

Will, as soon as he had this intelligence, speeded away in

hopes to trace her out ; declaring that he would never think of seeing me till he had heard some tidings of his lady.*

And now, Belford, all my hope is, that this fellow will hear of her at some one or other of those places.

* * * *

I have been traversing her room, taking up everything she but touched ; the glass she dressed at I was ready to break, for not giving me the personal image it was wont to reflect of *her*, whose idea is for ever present with me. Wanting *her*, I want my own soul. From her room to my own ; in the dining-room ; in none can I tarry.

* * * *

I have collected a description of her dress, and am resolved, if I cannot hear of her, to advertise her in the *Gazette*, as an eloped wife.

* * * *

She had on a brown lustring nightgown, fresh, and looking like new, as everything she wears does, from an elegance natural to her. A beaver hat, a black riband about her neck, and blue knots on her breast. A quilted petticoat of carnation-coloured satin, and a rose-diamond ring on her finger.

* * * *

A letter is put into my hands by Wilson ! from Miss Howe to her cruel friend !

I made no scruple to open it.

O this devilish Miss Howe, something must be resolved upon and done with that little fury.

* * * *

Read it, and avoid trembling for me if thou canst.

(To Miss Lætitia Beaumont.)

“ *Wednesday, June 7th.*

“ MY DEAREST FRIEND,

“ You will perhaps think that I have been too long silent.

* * * *

“ But I am not my own mistress. Then my mother is always up and down, and watching as if I were writing to a fellow.

* Will traced her to Hampstead.

"The women of the house where you are! O my dear. Upon my life this man is a vile contemptible villain.

* * * *

"Miss Lardner, whom you have seen at her cousin Biddulph's, saw you at St. James's church on Sunday fortnight. She kept you in her eye during the whole time, but could not once obtain the notice of yours, though she curtsied to you twice. She thought to pay her compliments when the service was over, for she doubted not but you were married, and for an odd reason, *because you came to church by yourself*. Every eye as usual, she said, was upon you, and this seeming to give you hurry, and you being nearer the door than she, you slid out before she could get to you. But she ordered her servant to follow you till you were housed. This servant saw you step into a chair, which waited for you, and you ordered the men to carry you to the place where they took you up.

"The next day Miss Lardner sent the servant out of mere curiosity to make private inquiry whether Mr. Lovelace were with you there, and this inquiry brought out from *different* people that the house was suspected to be one of those which receive and accommodate *fashionable people*.

"What can I say that will suitably express my abhorrence of such a villain as he must have been when he meditated to carry a Clarissa to such a place.

"Miss Lardner kept this to herself some days, for she loves you and admires you of all women. At last she revealed it to Miss Biddulph, Miss Biddulph communicated it to Miss Lloyd, and so, like a whispered scandal, it passed through several canals, and then came to me—last Monday.

* * * *

"But now, my dear, do I apprehend that you are in greater danger than ever yet you have been in if you are not married in a week.

"He is convinced that he has not been able to draw you off your guard; that therefore he is resolved to do you all the *poor justice* that it is in the power of such a wretch to do you. He is rather induced to this that all his own family have warmly engaged themselves in your cause, and that it is his *highest interest* to be just to you. Then the horrid wretch loves you. . . And, alas! my dear, I know you loved him.

* * * *

"One word more. Command me up if I can be of the

least service or pleasure to you. I value not fame, not censure, nor even life itself, as I do your honour and friendship; for is not your honour mine? And is not your friendship the pride of my life?

"May Heaven preserve you, my dearest creature, in honour and safety is the prayer of your ever faithful and affectionate

"ANNA HOWE."

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Thursday morning, 5 o'clock.

WELL, Jack, what thinkest thou of this last letter? Miss Howe values not either *fame* or *censure*, and thinkest thou that this letter will not bring the little fury up? She knows whither to come now.

* * * *

I am always careful to open covers cautiously and to preserve seals entire. I will draw out from this cursed letter an alphabet. Nor was Nick Rowe ever half so diligent to learn Spanish at the Quixotic recommendation of a certain peer, as I will be to gain the mastery of this vixen's hand.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Thursday evening, June 8th.

THIS man has proved himself a villain.

After my last, the contents of this will surprise you . . . I have escaped—Heaven be praised! and have now no other concern than to find some family going beyond sea, if I might choose, in some of our American colonies, never to be heard of more by my relations.

I am at present at one Mrs. Moore's, at Hampstead. My heart misgave me at coming to this village, because I had been here with him more than once. But I knew not what to do better. I shall stay here till I can receive your answer to this, in which you will be pleased to let me know if I cannot be hid till the heat of his search be over. The Deptford-road, I imagine, will be the right direction to hear of a passage, and to get safely aboard. . . .

O why was the great fiend of all unchained and permitted to assume so specious a form? And what had I done that he should be let loose particularly upon me?

Mrs. Moore is a widow, and of good character, and of this one of her neighbours, of whom I bought a handkerchief,

purposely to make inquiry before I would venture, informed me.

When I left their house, I walked backward and forward upon the hill, not knowing what to do, till I found a lodging.

You will direct for me, my dear, by the name of Mrs. Harriot Lucas.

Your unhappy

C. H.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Friday morning, past 2 o'clock.

Io triumphe! Io, Clarissa, sing! Once more what a happy man thy friend. A silly dear novice, to be heard to tell the coachman whither to carry her! And to go to *Hampstead*, of all the villages about London. The place where we had been together more than once.

But after this exultation thou wilt ask if I have already got back my charmer. I have not; but knowing where she is is almost the same thing as having her in my power.

Thou wilt be impatient to know how I came by my lights. Read the enclosed and remember the instructions which I have given my fellow in apprehension of such an elopement.

“HONNORED SIR,

This is to sertifie your honner as how I am heer at Hamestet, wher I have found out my lady to be in logins at one Mrs. Moore’s, near upon Hampstet Hethe, and I have so ordered matters that her ladiship cannot stur but I must have notice of her goins and comins.

“My lady knows nothing of my being hereaway.

“If your honner come to the Upper Flax I will be in site all the day about the tapp-house or the hethe. I have borrowed another cote, instead of your honner’s livery, and a blacke wigg, so cannot be known by my lady, iff as how she should see me, and have made as if I had the tooth-ake, with myhan cerchefe at my mouthe.

“I am, please your honner, your honner’s most dutiful and happy sarvant,

“WM. SUMMERS.”

* * * *

All round me so still; the rattling of the chariot-wheels at a distance all I hear.

To this angel of a woman do I fly.

And now, dressed like a bridegroom, my heart elated beyond that of the most desiring one (attended by a footman whom my beloved never saw), I am already at Hampstead!

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Upper Flask, Hampstead,

Friday morning, 7 o'clock, June 9th.

I HAVE been here an hour and a half.

All Will's account from the lady's flight to his finding her again, all the accounts of the people of the house, the coachman's information to Will, stand thus:—

The Hampstead coach, when the dear fugitive came to it, had but two passengers in it. But she made the fellow go off directly, paying for the vacant places.

The two passengers directing the coachman to set them down at the Upper Flask, she bid him set her down there also.

They took leave of her, and she went into the house, and asked if she could not have a dish of tea and a room to herself for half an hour.

They showed her up to the very room where I now am. She sat at the very table I now write upon; and, I believe, the chair I sit in was hers.

She seemed spiritless and fatigued. The landlady herself chose to attend so genteel and lovely a guest. She asked her if she would have bread and butter with her tea?

No. She could not eat.

They had very good biscuits.

As she pleased.

The landlady stepped out for some, and returning on a sudden, she observed the sweet fugitive endeavouring to restrain a violent burst of grief to which she had given way in that little interval.

However, when the tea came, she made the landlady sit down with her, and asked her about the villages and roads in that neighbourhood.

The landlady took notice to her, that she seemed to be troubled in mind.

"Tender spirits," she replied, "could not part with *dear* friends without concern."

She meant *me*, no doubt.

She made no inquiry about a lodging, though by the sequel thou wilt observe, that she seemed to intend to go no farther that night than Hampstead. But after she had

drank two dishes, and put a biscuit in her pocket (sweet soul! to serve for her supper perhaps), she laid down half a crown, and refusing change, sighing, took leave, saying she would proceed towards Hendon, the distance to which had been one of her questions.

They offered to send to know if a Hampstead coach were not to go to Hendon that evening.

"No matter," she said. "Perhaps she might meet the chariot."

Another of her *feints*, for how, or with whom, could anything of this sort have been concerted since yesterday morning?

She had, as the people took notice, something so uncommonly noble in her air, that she was sure she was of quality. And having no servant with her (her fine eyes, the gentlewoman calls them) being swelled and red, they were sure there was an elopement in the case, either from parents or guardians, for they supposed her too young and too maidenly to be married; and were she married, no husband would let such a fine young creature be unattended, nor give her cause for so much grief in her countenance. Then, at times, she seemed to be so bewildered, they said, that they were afraid she had it in her head to make away with herself.

All these things excited their curiosity, and they engaged a footman who was drinking at the taphouse to watch her motions. This fellow reported the following particulars:—

She went towards Hendon, passing by the sign of the Castle on the Heath; then, stopping, looked about her, and down into the valley before her. Then, turning her face towards London, she seemed, by the motion of her handkerchief to her eyes, to weep, repenting (who knows?) the rash step she had taken, and wishing herself back again.

Then, continuing on a few paces, she stopped again; and, again seeming to weep, directed her course back towards Hampstead.

I am glad she wept so much, because no heart bursts which has that kindly relief. How often, in the past twelve hours, have I wished that I could cry most confoundedly.

She then saw a coach-and-four driving towards her. She crossed the path, as if to speak to the coachman. He earnestly looked at *her*. Every one did so who passed her (so the man who dogged her was the less suspected). Happy rogue of a coachman, hadst thou known whose

notice thou didst engage. It was the divine Clarissa Harlowe at whom thou gazedst, mine own Clarissa Harlowe!

The lady seemed to want resolution; the horses kept on, and the distance soon lengthened beyond recall. With a wistful eye she looked after him, sighed, and wept again, as the servant, who then slyly passed her, observed.

By this time she had reached the houses. She looked up at every one as she passed, now and then breathing upon her bared hand, and applying it to her swelled eyes to abate the redness and dry the tears. At last, seeing a bill up for lodgings, she walked backwards and forwards half a dozen times, as if unable to determine what to do, and then went farther into the town. There the fellow lost her for a few minutes; but he soon saw her come out of a drapery shop, attended with a maid, having, as he believed, bought some little matters, and, as it proved, got that maid-servant to go with her to the house she is now at.

The fellow, after waiting, and not seeing her come out, returned, concluding that she had taken lodgings there.

And here, supposing my narrative of the dramatic kind, ends act the first.

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Upper Flask, Hampstead.

WILL told the people here before I came that his lady was but lately married to one of the finest gentlemen in the world. But that he, being very gay and lively, she was mortal jealous of him, and in a fit of that sort had eloped from him. For although she loved him dearly, and he doted upon her, yet she was apt to be very wilful and sullen, if he might take the liberty to say so, and if she could not have her own way in everything, would be for leaving him. That she had three or four times played his master such tricks, but with all the virtue and innocence in the world, running away to an intimate friend of hers, who, though a young lady of honour, was but too indulgent to her in this her *only* failing, for which reason his master had brought her to London lodgings, their usual residence being in the country; and that, on his refusing to satisfy her about a lady he had been seen with in St. James's Park, she had, for the first time since she came to town, served his master thus, whom he had left half distracted on that account.

And now I am going to try if I can't agree with Goody

Moore for lodgings and other conveniences for my sick wife.

"Wife, Lovelace?" methinks thou questionest.

"Yes, wife."

* * * *

I can suit myself to any condition, that is one comfort.

(Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.)

Hampstead,

Friday night, June 9th.

Now, Belford, for the narrative of narratives.

Although grievously afflicted with the gout,* I alighted out of my chariot, leaning very hard on my cane and on my new servant's shoulder, the same instant that he had knocked at the door, that I might be sure of admission into the house.

I took care to button my great coat about me, and to cover with it even the pommel of my sword, it being a little too gay for my years, my chin wrapt up for the toothache, my slouched lace hat, and so much of my wig as was visible, giving me altogether the appearance of an antiquated beau.

[*Enter Goody Moore.*]

"Your servant, madam; but you must excuse me, I cannot well stand. I find by the bill that you have lodgings to let," mumbling my words as if I had lost some of my fore teeth. "Be pleased to inform me what they are, for I like your situation; and I will tell you my family—I have a wife, a good old woman, older than myself, by the way, a pretty deal. She is in a bad state of health, and is advised into the Hampstead air."

"When, sir, shall you want to come in?"

"I will take them this very day, and bring my wife in the afternoon."

"We have a single lady, who will be gone in two or three days. She has one of the best apartments—that will then be at liberty."

"You have one or two good ones meantime I presume, madam, just to receive my wife. Excuse me, madam, that I am muffled up this warm weather. I have a dreadful pain in my jaw."

* * * *

* Lovelace was in disguise from head to foot.

"I'll just look at the apartments."

She led the way.

There were three rooms on a floor; the third, she said, handsomer, but the lady was in it.

I saw she was, for as I hobbled up, crying out upon my weak ankles, in the hoarse voice I had assumed, I beheld a little piece of her as she cast an eye, with the door ajar, to observe who was coming up; and seeing such an old clumsy fellow, great-coated in weather so warm, slouched, and muffled up, she withdrew. But it was not so with me, for thou canst not imagine how my heart danced at the very glimpse of her.

I liked the lodging well, and the more as she said the third room was still handsomer.

"I must sit down, madam," and chose the darkest part of the room. "Won't you take a seat yourself?"

She said I was a very considerate gentleman.

"But, madam, cannot anybody just peep into the other apartment?"

"The lady desires to be private, sir. But,"—and was going to ask her leave.

I caught hold of her hand.

"Stay, stay, madam; it mayn't be proper, if the lady loves to be private. Don't let me intrude upon the lady."

* * * *

And I appeared, upon the whole, so indifferent about seeing the room or the lady, that the good woman was the more eager I should see both.

To be brief, she went in, and after a little while came out again.

"The lady, sir, is retired to her closet. So you may go in and look at the room."

Then how my heart began again to play its tricks.

Oh, Belford, to be so near my angel, think what a painful constraint I was under!

I was resolved to fetch her out if possible, and pretending to be going, "You can't agree as to any *time*, Mrs. Moore, when we can have this third room, can you? Not that I would incommode the lady."

"Mrs. Moore," said my charmer, and never did her voice sound so harmonious to me, "you may acquaint the gentleman that I shall stay here only till I receive an answer to a letter I have written into the country, and rather than be your hindrance, I will take up with any apartment a pair of stairs higher."

"Not for the world, young lady," cried I. "My wife—well as I love her—should lie in a garret rather than put such a considerate lady as you seem to be to the least inconvenience. But since you have so much goodness, madam, if I could but just look into the closet as I stand, I could tell my wife whether it is large enough to hold a cabinet she will have with her wherever she goes."

Then my charmer opened the door, and blazed upon me, as it were, in a flood of light, like what one might imagine would strike a man who, born blind, had by some propitious power been blessed with his sight all at once in a meridian sun.

Upon my soul, I never was so strangely affected before. I had much ado to forbear discovering myself that instant. In great disorder I said, looking into the closet and around it, "There is room, I see, for my wife's cabinet. Nothing so valuable as a lady, I see, can be brought into it."

She started, and looked at me with terror. The truth of the compliment had taken dissimulation from my accent.

I saw it was impossible to conceal myself longer. I unbuttoned my cape, I pulled off my hat, I threw open my great coat, and, like the devil in Milton,—an odd comparison though—

"I started up in my own form divine,
Touch'd by the beam of her celestial eye,
More potent than Ithuriel's spear!"

Now, Belford, for a similitude to illustrate the scene, and the effect it had upon my charmer and the gentlewoman.

She no sooner saw who it was than she gave three violent screams, and before I could catch her in my arms, down she sunk at my feet in a fit, which made me curse my indiscretion for so suddenly revealing myself.

The gentlewoman seeing so strange an alteration in my person and dress, cried out, "Murder, help! Murder, help!" by turns for half a dozen times running.

This alarmed the house, and up ran two servant-maids and my servant after them. I cried out for water and hartshorn, and every one flew a different way.

* * * *

For my part I was so intent upon restoring my angel, that I regarded nobody else. And at last, she slowly recovering motion with bitter sighs and sobs, I called upon her in the tenderest accent, as I kneeled by her, my arm

supporting her head, "My angel, my charmer, my Clarissa! look upon me, my dearest life, I am not angry with you. I will forgive you, my best-beloved."

I threw up the closet-sash for air, and then retiring to one corner of the room, I made my servant pull off my gouty stockings, brush my hat, and loop it up into the usual smart cock.

I withdrew once more from the closet, finding her beginning to recover, lest the sight of me too soon should throw her back again.

The first words she said were, "Hide me! O hide me! Is he gone?"

* * * *

"The dear creature," said I, "may *well* be concerned to see me. If *you*, madam, had a husband who loved you as I love her, you would not, I am confident, fly from him, and expose yourself to hazards, as she does whenever she has not all her way, and yet with a mind not capable of intentional evil, but mother-spoilt. This is her fault, and all her fault; and the more inexcusable it is, as I am the man of her choice, and have reason to think she loves me above all men in the world."

Here, Jack, was a story to support to the lady, face to face, too!

I begged they would not suffer her to talk, for she was accustomed to fits.

They promised to keep her quiet.

She was full of exclamations. "Unhappy creature! miserable! and undone!" she called herself, wrung her hands, and begged they would assist her to escape from the terrible evils she should suffer.

They would have had her to lie down, but she refused, sinking, however, into an easy chair; for she trembled so, she could not stand.

By this time I hoped that she was enough recovered to bear my presence. I went into the room again.

"Oh, there he is!" said she, and threw her apron over her face. "I cannot look upon him! Begone! Touch me not!"

For I took her struggling hand, beseeching her to be pacified; but stamping and sighing as if her heart would break, she put her hand to her forehead.

* * * *

"I shall be quite distracted. Unhand me, sir!" said she; "I will not be touched by you."

"What a turn is here! Lately so happy! nothing wanting but a reconciliation between you and your friends! That reconciliation in such a happy train! Shall so slight, so accidental an occasion, be suffered to overturn all our happiness?"

She started up with a trembling impatience, her apron falling from her indignant face. "Now," said she, "that thou darest to call the occasion slight and accidental, and that I am happily out of thy vile hands, and out of a house I have reason to believe as vile, traitor and wretch that thou art, I will venture to cast an eye upon thee! And oh, that it were in my power, in mercy to my sex, to look thee first into shame and remorse, and then into death!"

This hurricane, like other hurricanes, was presently allayed by a shower. She threw herself once more into her arm-chair, and begged pardon of the women for her passionate excess; but not of me.

By what a scorn was every lovely feature agitated!

"Begone from me, man! What pretence hast thou for tormenting me thus? What right—what title?"

"Dearest creature, what questions you ask! Questions that you can as well answer yourself."

"I *can*, I *will*! and *thus* I answer them—"

Still louder raised I my voice. She was overborne. "Sweet soul! it would be hard," thought I, and yet I was very angry with her, "if such a spirit as thine cannot be brought to yield to such a one as mine."

I lowered my voice on her silence. All gentle, all persuasive, my accent: my head bowed, one hand held out, the other on my honest heart. "Lady Betty," I said, "will be in town with my cousin Montague in a day or two. They will be your visitors. I beseech you, do not carry this misunderstanding so far as that Lord M. and Lady Betty, and Lady Sarah, may know it. Lady Betty will not let you rest till you consent to accompany her to her own seat, and to that lady may you safely entrust your cause."

Upon my pausing a moment, she was going to break out.

"If we are to *separate for ever*," in a strong and solemn voice, proceeded I, "this island shall not long be troubled with me. Anything will I come into that shall make for *your* peace, and the reconciliation your heart was so lately set upon. But I humbly conceive that you should come into

better temper with me, were it but to give a favourable appearance to what has passed, and weight to any future application to your friends, in whatever way you shall think proper to make it."

I then retired to the next apartment, with a low bow and solemn air.

* * * *

(Lovelace to Belford.)

8 o'clock, Saturday morning, June 10th.

I AM come back from Mrs. Moore's, whither I went in order to attend my charmer's commands. But no admittance—a very bad night.

Doubtless she must be much concerned that she has carried her resentments so very far.

* * * *

My man Will lies in the house.

* * * *

But my precautions end not here.

My *spouse* may have further occasion for the messengers she sends to Miss Howe. With one of these Will is already well acquainted. The post, general and penny, must be strictly watched.

* * * *

James Harlowe is warned against

* * * *

I have ordered Mowbray and Tourville to take their quarters at Hampstead for a week, with their fellows to attend them. Hold thyself in readiness.

* * * *

(Lovelace to Belford.)

WHAT will be the issue of all my plots and contrivances, devil take me if I can divine.

* * * *

Mrs. Moore brought down word that the lady was following her.

* * * *

I implored the return of that value which she had acknowledged once to have had for me. I presumed to flatter myself that Lady Betty, in her own person, would be able, on my promised reformation, to prevail in my favour,

especially as our prospects in other respects, with regard to the general reconciliation wished for, were so happy. "But let me owe to *your own generosity*, my dearest creature," said I, "rather than to the mediation of *any person on earth*, the forgiveness I am a humble suitor for. Best beloved of my soul, must it be that your first personal knowledge of my relations should be begun in recriminations, in appeals? As Lady Betty will be here soon, it will not perhaps be possible for you to receive her visit with a brow absolutely serene. But, dearest creature, I beseech you, let the misunderstanding pass as a slight one."

This might have done with any other woman in the world but *this*.

* * * *

Her bosom heaved with a noble disdain. "Cheated out of myself from the very first! A fugitive from my own family! Renounced by my relations! insulted by you! laying humble claim to the protection of yours! Is not this the light in which I must appear to the ladies of your family, to all the world? You are a stranger to the mind of Clarissa Harlowe if you think her capable of so poor a pride!"

She went to the farther end of the room.

"But, dearest, dearest creature, let me on my knees"—and down I dropped, her face all the time turned half from me, as she stood at the window, her handkerchief often at her eyes—"on my knees, let me plead your promised forgiveness, and let us not appear to them, on their visit, thus unhappy with each other. Lady Betty, the next hour that she sees you, will write her opinion of you, and of the likelihood of our future happiness, to Lady Sarah, her sister, a weak-spirited woman, who now hopes to supply to herself, in my bride, the lost daughter she still mourns for." Casting her eye on me, "Rise, Mr. Lovelace; kneel not to the poor creature whom you have insulted; how cruel the occasion; how mean the submission!"

* * * *

I was perfectly eloquent in my vows and protestations. Her tearful eyes were cast down upon me; a glow upon each cheek; a visible anguish in every lovely feature. At last her trembling knees seeming to fail her, she dropped into the next chair; her charming face, as if seeking for a hiding-place, which a mother's bosom would have best supplied, sinking upon her shoulder.

I forgot at the instant all my views of revenge. I threw myself at her feet as she sat, and, snatching her hand, pressed it with my lips. I besought Heaven to forgive my past offences, as I designed honourably by the charmer of my heart, if once she would restore me to her favour. And I thought I felt drops of scalding water trickle down upon my cheeks; while mine, glowing like fire, seemed to scorch up the unwelcome strangers.

She was silent. I rejoiced in her silence. The dear creature, thought I, has actually forgiven me in her heart!

I took her reluctant hand, and besought her to promise to meet me early in the morning.

"To what purpose? Have you more to say? I have had enough of vows and protestations, Mr. Lovelace. To what purpose should I meet you to-morrow morning?"

I repeated my request, and that in the most fervent manner, naming six in the morning.

"You know that I am always stirring before that hour at this season of the year," was the half-expressed consent.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Sunday morning, June 11th.

I RISE from my seat, refresh, new dress, and so to my charmer, whom I hope to prevail upon to walk with me upon the Heath this warm, fine morning. The birds must have awakened her before now; they are in full song. She always gloried in accustoming herself to behold the sun rise.

Her window salutes the east. The valleys must be gilded by his rays. Already have they made the uplands smile.

* * * *

Sunday.

I have had the honour of my charmer's company for two hours. We met before six, in Mrs. Moore's garden. A walk on the Heath refused me.

The sedateness of her aspect and her kind compliance in this meeting gave me hopes; but the utmost I could obtain was that she would take no resolution in my favour till she received Miss Howe's next letter.

* * * *

She frankly owned that she had once thought of embarking *out of all our ways* for some one of our American colonies: but now that she had been *compelled* to see me, she thought she might be happiest if Miss Howe could find

her a reputable and private asylum, till her cousin Morden could come. But if he came not soon, she might yet perhaps go abroad, for she could not think of returning to her father's house, since her brother's rage, her sister's upbraidings, her father's anger, her mother's sorrowings, would be insupportable.

But, determined as she seems to be, it was evident she had still some tenderness for me.

She wept as she talked, and often sighed. She looked at me twice with gentleness; but its benign rays were as often *snatched* back, and her face averted, as if her sweet eyes were not to be trusted and could not stand against mine, endeavouring to penetrate to her very soul.

More than once I took her hand. She struggled not *much* against the freedom. I pressed it once with my lips. She was not *very* angry. A frown indeed; but a frown that had more distress in it than indignation.

* * * *

I hoped, I said, that she would admit of the intended visit, which I had so often mentioned, of the two ladies.

She was *here*. She had seen *me*. She could not help herself. She had the highest regard for the ladies of my family, because of their worthy characters. There she turned away her sweet face and vanquished a sigh.

I kneeled to her then. We were upon the grass-walk. I caught her hand. I besought her with an earnestness that called my heart to my eyes, to make me, by her forgiveness and example, more worthy of them and of her.

* * * *

I told her that I had hoped, from the generous concern she had expressed for me when I was so suddenly and dangerously taken ill. (The ipecacuanha experiment, Jack!)

She interrupted me. "Well have you rewarded me for the concern you speak of! I will frankly own, now that I am determined to think no more of you, that you might have made an interest."

She paused. I besought her to proceed.

* * * *

We had gone but a few paces towards the house, when we were met by the notice that breakfast was ready. I could only beseech her to give me hope of a renewed conversation after breakfast.

No; she would go to church.

And into the house she went, and upstairs directly. Nor would she oblige me with her company at the tea-table.

* * * *

The fair inexorable has actually gone to church.

R. LOVELACE.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Sunday.

O BELFORD! I have within this half-hour obtained possession of the expected letter. With the former I dispatch this; return it when thou hast perused it.

(Extracts from Miss Howe's letter, opened by Lovelace.)

HEAVEN be praised! you have escaped from all their snares, and *now are out of danger*. So I will forbear to communicate to you some *new stories* of the *abhorred wretch* which have come to my ears. One in particular, of so *shocking* a nature! Indeed, my dear, the man is a devil. How my soul spurns the villain.

Your thought of going abroad sensibly affects me. But I hope you will not be under a necessity of quitting your country. Were I sure that that must be the cruel case, I would abandon all my own better prospects, and soon be with you. And I would accompany you whithersoever you went, and share fortunes with you: for it is impossible that I should be happy, if I knew that you were exposed to the perils of the sea, or the attempt of other vile men.

How my heart is torn to think of the necessity so dear a creature is driven to of hiding herself! Devilish fellow!

* * * *

After a while, I can procure you a lodging in one of our neighbouring villages, where I may have the happiness to be your daily visitor. And if Hickman be not silly and apish, I may the sooner think of marrying, that I may, without control, receive the darling of my heart.

Many, very many, happy days do I hope we shall yet see together; and as this is *my* hope, I expect that it will be *your* consolation.

* * * *

You hate him, heartily hate him, I hope, my dear—I am *sure* you do. It would be strange, if so much purity of life and manners were not to abhor what is so repugnant to itself.

My mother knows nothing yet of your abandoning the fellow. Forgive me, but he is not entitled to good manners.

ANNA HOWE.

New stories of me, Jack! What can they be? I have not found that my generosity to my Rosebud ever did me *due* credit with this pair of friends. Very hard, Belford, that credits cannot be set against debits, and a balance struck in a rake's favour, as well as in that of every common man! But he, from whom no good is expected, is not allowed the merit of the good he does.

I ought to have been a little more attentive to *character* than I have been. For, notwithstanding that the measures of right and wrong are said to be so manifest, let me tell thee, that *character* biasses and runs away with all mankind. Let a man or woman once establish themselves in the world's opinion, and all that either of them does will be sanctified. Nay, in the very courts of justice, does not *character* acquit or condemn as often as facts, and sometimes even in spite of facts? Yet, impolitic that I have been, and am! to be so careless of mine! And now, I doubt, it is irretrievable. But to leave moralizing.

Thou, Jack, knowest almost all my enterprises worth remembering. Can this particular story, which this girl hints at, be that of Lucy Villars? Or can she have heard of my intrigue with the pretty gipsy, who met me in Norwood, and of the trap I caught her cruel husband in, a fellow as gloomy and tyrannical as old Harlowe, when he pursued a wife who would not have deserved ill of *him*, if he had deserved well of *her*? But he was not quite drowned. The man is alive at this day; and Miss Howe mentions the story as a *very* shocking one. Besides, both these are a twelvemonth old, or more.

But evil fame and scandal are always *new*. When the offender has forgot a vile fact, it is often told to one and to another, who, having never heard of it before, trumpet it about as a novelty to others. But well said the honest corregidor at Madrid (a saying with which I enriched Lord M.'s collection),—" *Good actions are remembered but for a day: bad ones for many years after the life of the guilty.*" Such is the relish that the world has for scandal. In other words, such is the desire which every one has to exculpate himself by blackening his neighbour. You and I, Belford, have been very kind to the world, in furnishing it with opportunities to gratify its devil.

Miss Howe will abandon her own better prospects, and share

fortunes with her, were she to go abroad. Charming romancer! I must set about this girl, Jack. I have always had hopes of a woman whose passions carry her into such altitudes! Had I attacked Miss Howe first, I could have brought her to my lure in a fortnight.

But thinkest thou that there is anything in these high flights among the sex? Verily, Jack, these vehement friendships are nothing but chaff and stubble, liable to be blown away by the very wind that raises them. Apes! mere apes of *us*! they think the word *friendship* has a pretty sound with it; and it is much talked of; a fashionable word: and so, truly, a single woman, who thinks she has a soul, would be thought to have found a fellow-soul for it in her own sex. But I repeat, that the word is a *mere* word, the thing a *mere* name with them,—a shuttlecock, which they are fond of striking to and fro, to make one another glow in the frosty weather of a single state; but which, when a *man* comes in between the pretended *inseparables*, is given up, like their music and other maidenly amusements; which, nevertheless, may be necessary to keep the pretty rogues out of active mischief. They then, in short, having caught the *fish*, lay aside the *net*.*

Thou hast a mind, perhaps, to make an exception for these two ladies. With all my heart. My *Clarissa* has, if *woman* has, a soul capable of friendship. Her flame is bright and steady. But Miss *Howe's*, were it not kept up by her mother's opposition, is too vehement to endure. How often have I known opposition not only cement friendship, but create love? I doubt not but poor *Hickman* would fare the better with this vixen, if her mother were as heartily against him, as she is for him.

Thus much indeed, as to these two ladies, I will grant thee; that the active spirit of the one and the meek disposition of the other may make their friendship more durable than it would otherwise be; for this is certain, that in every friendship, whether male or female, there must be a man and a woman spirit, a *forbearing* one, to make it permanent.

But this I pronounce, as a truth, which all experience confirms; that friendship between women never holds to

* He alludes here to the story of a pope, who, once a poor fisherman, through every preferment he rose to, even to that of the cardinalate, hung up in view of all his guests a net, as a token of humility. But when he arrived at the pontificate he took it down, saying that there was no need of the net when he had caught the fish.

the sacrifice of capital gratifications, or to the endangering of life, limb, or estate, as it often does in our nobler sex.

Miss Howe, Jack, is a charming girl. Didst ever see her? Too much fire and spirit in her eye indeed, for a girl! But that's no fault with a man that can lower that fire and spirit at pleasure; and I know I am the man that can.

A sweet auburn beauty is Miss Howe. A first beauty among beauties when her sweeter friend with such an assemblage of serene gracefulness, of natural elegance, of native sweetness, yet conscious, though not arrogant, dignity, every feature glowing with intelligence, is not in company.

The difference between the two, when together, I have sometimes delighted to *read*, in the addresses of a stranger entering into the presence of both, when standing side by side. There never was an instance, on such an occasion, where the stranger paid not his first devoirs to my Clarissa.

A respectful solemn awe sat upon every feature of the addresser's face. His eyes seemed to ask leave to approach her; and lower than common, whether man or woman, was the bow or curtsy. And although this awe was immediately diminished by her condescending sweetness, yet went it not so entirely off, but that you might see the reverence remain, as if the person saw more of the goddess than of the woman in her.

But the moment the same stranger turns to Miss Howe (though proud and saucy, and erect and bridling, she), you will observe by the turn of his countenance, and the air of his address, a kind of equality assumed. He appears to have discovered the woman in her, charming as that woman is. He smiles. He seems to expect repartee and smartness, and is never disappointed. But then visibly he prepares himself to *give* as well as *take*. He dares, after he has been a while in her company, to dispute a point with her. Every point yielded up to the other, though no assuming or dogmatical air compels it.

In short, with Miss Howe, a bold man sees—no doubt but Sir George Colmar did—that he and she may either very soon be familiar together—I mean with innocence—or he may so far incur her displeasure, as to be forbid her presence for ever.

For my own part, when I was first introduced to this lady, which was by my goddess when she herself was a visitor at Mrs. Howe's, I had not been half an hour with her, but I hungered and thirsted after a romp with the lively rogue; and in the second or third visit was more de-

terred by the delicacy of her friend than by what I apprehended from her own. "This charming creature's presence," thought I, "awes us both." And I wished her absence, though any other woman were present, that I might try the difference in Miss Howe's behaviour before her friend's face or behind her back.

Delicate women *make* delicate women, as well as decent men. With all Miss Howe's fire and spirit, it was easy to see, by her very eye, that she watched for lessons, and feared reproof, from the penetrating eye of her milder-dispositioned friend; and yet it was as easy to observe, in the candour and

* * * *

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Sunday night—Monday morning.

I WENT down with revenge in my heart, the contents of Miss Howe's letter almost engrossing me, the moment that Miss Harlowe and Mrs. Moore came in; but in my countenance all the gentle, the serene, that the glass could teach; and after much supplication, obtained the favour of my beloved's company for another walk in the garden.

I poured my whole soul into her attentive ear,* and besought her returning favour.

I told her Lady Betty and Miss Montague were undoubtedly arrived in town by this time. I would set out early in the morning to attend them. They adored her. They longed to see her. They would not be denied her company into Oxfordshire. Whither could she better go, to be free from her brother's insults? Whither, to be absolutely made unapprehensive of anybody else? Might I have any hopes of her returning favour?

But all the concession I could bring her to was that she would wait the visit of the two ladies, if they came in a day or two, or before she received the expected letter from Miss Howe.

"Thank heaven for this!" thought I. "And now may I go to town with hopes at my return to find thee, dearest, where I shall leave thee."

* Miss Howe in a letter says, "That she was always more afraid of Clarissa than of her mother;" and "that she fears her almost as much as she loves her." In many other letters she verifies this observation of Lovelace.

And now, Belford, I set out upon business.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Monday, June 12th.

DIDST ever see a license, Jack? "*Edmund, by divine permission, Lord Bishop of London, to our well-beloved in Christ, Robert Lovelace.*" Your servant, my good lord! What have I done to merit so much goodness, who never saw your lordship in my life?

* * * *

A good whimsical instrument, take it all together! But what, thinkest thou, are the arms to this matrimonial har-binger?—Why, in the first place, *two crossed swords*, to show that marriage is a state of offence as well as defence; *three lions*, to denote that those who enter into the state, ought to have a triple proportion of courage.

* * * *

Now my plot thickens.

* * * *

I am preparing, with lady Betty and Lady Montague, to wait upon my beloved with a coach-and-four, for Lady Betty will not stir out with a pair, and this is a well-known part of her character.

"But as to the arms and crest upon the coach and trappings?"

Blunt* must supply her while her own is new-lining and repairing. Liveries nearly Lady Betty's.

Thou hast seen Lady Betty Lawrance several times, hast thou not, Belford?

"No, never in my life."

But thou hast. Knowest thou not Lady Betty's other name?

"Other name! has she two?"

She has, and what thinkest thou of *Lady Bab Wallis*?

"Oh, the devil!"

Now thou hast it. *Lady Barbara*, thou knowest, lifted up in circumstances, never appears herself but on occasions special; to pass for a duchess, or countess at least. She has always been admired for a grandeur in her air that few women of quality can come up to, and never was supposed to be other than what she passed for.

* The fashionable coachmaker of the day.

And who, thinkest thou, is my cousin Charlotte Montague?

"Nay, how should I know?"

How, indeed! Why, my little Johanetta Golding. A lively, yet modest-looking girl is my cousin Montague.

There, Belford, is an aunt!—there's a cousin! Both have wit at will. Both are accustomed to aye quality.

And how dost think I dress them out? I'll tell thee.

Lady Betty in gold tissue, with jewels of high price.

My cousin Montague in pale pink, standing on end with silver flowers, not quite so richly jewelled as Lady Betty, but ear-rings and solitaire very valuable and infinitely becoming.

Johanetta, thou knowest, has a good complexion, a fine neck, and ears remarkably fine; so has Charlotte. She is nearly of Charlotte's stature too.

Laces both, the richest that could be procured.

Thou canst not imagine what a sum the loan of the jewels cost me, though but for three days.

This sweet girl will half ruin me. But seest thou not by this time that her reign is short? Mrs. Sinclair has prepared everything for her reception once more.

* * * *

Here come the ladies, attended by Susan Morrison, a tenant-farmer's daughter, as Lady Betty's woman, with her hands before her, and thoroughly instructed.

How dress advantages women, especially those who have naturally a genteel air and turn, and have had education.

Hadst thou seen how they paraded it: "cousin," and "cousin," and "nephew," at every word, Lady Betty looking *haughtily condescending*; Charlotte gallanting her fan and swimming over the floor without touching it.

"How I long to see my niece-elect!" cries one, for they are told that we are not married.

"How I long to see my dear cousin that is to be!" the other.

"Your la'ship," and "Your la'ship," and an awkward curtsy at every address, prim Susan Morrison.

"Top your parts, ye villains! My charmer is as cool and as distinguishing as I am. Your commonly-assumed dignity won't do for me now. Airs of superiority, as if *born* to rank. But no over-do.

"A little *graver*, Lady Betty."

"That's the air. Charmingly hit. You have it."

"Now for *your* part, cousin Charlotte."

"Pretty well. But a little too frolicky that air. Yet have I prepared my beloved to expect in you both great vivacity and quality-freedom."

"Sprightly, but not confident, cousin Charlotte."

"Suppose *me* to be my charmer. Now you are to encounter my *examining* eye, and my *doubting* heart."

"Charming! Perfectly right!"

"Pretty well, cousin Charlotte, for a young country lady! You must not be supposed to have forgot your boarding school airs."

"Too low, too low, Lady Betty, for your years and your quality."

"Graceful ease, conscious dignity, like that of my charmer, O how hard to hit!"

"Both together now."

"Charming! That's the air, Lady Betty! That's the cue, cousin Charlotte."

And now we are gone.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

At Mrs. Sinclair's,

Monday afternoon.

ALL is right as heart can wish. In spite of all objection; in spite of a reluctance next to fainting; in spite of all foresight, vigilance, suspicion, once more is the charmer of my soul in her old lodgings.

I have not time for the particulars of our management.

My beloved is now directing some of her clothes to be packed up, never more to enter this house; nor ever more will she, I dare say, when once again out of it.

Yet not so much as a condition of forgiveness. The Harlowe-spirited fair-one will not deserve my mercy. She will wait for Miss Howe's next letter.

Lady Betty and Miss Montague are entirely attached to her. Whatever she says is gospel. They are guarantees for her return to Hampstead this night. They are to go back with her. A supper bespoken by Lady Betty at Mrs. Moore's. All the vacant apartments there to be filled with them and their attendants till they can prevail upon the dear perverse to restore me to her favour, and to accompany Lady Betty to Oxfordshire.

The dear creature has thus far condescended—that she will write to Miss Howe and acquaint her with the present situation of things.

If she write, I shall see what she writes.

Miss Montague dwells upon every word that falls from her lips. She perfectly adores her new cousin.

In short we are here, as at Hampstead, all joy—all except my beloved, in whose sweet face, her almost fainting reluctance to re-enter these doors not overcome, reigns a kind of anxious serenity.

Methinks I begin to pity the apprehensive beauty. But adieu reflection!—begone consideration! Be remembered her broken word—her flight! Be remembered her Hampstead virulence! What is it she ought not to expect from an unchained Beelzebub and a plotting villain?

Be her preference of the single life to *me* also remembered! That she despises me; that she even refuses to be my wife! To be rejected by a daughter of the *Harlowes*! The ladies of my own family—for she *thinks* them the ladies of my family—supplicating in vain for her returning favour to their despised kinsman, and taking laws from her proud punctilio.

Be the execrations of her vixen friend likewise remembered, and need I throw the sins of her accursed family into the scale?

I'll teach the dear charming creature to emulate me in contrivance; I'll teach her to weave webs and plots against her conqueror; I'll show her that in her smuggling schemes she is but a spider compared to me, and that she has all this time been spinning only a cobweb.

* * * *

What shall we do now? We are immersed in the depth of grief and apprehension. She begins to be afraid that she shall not go this night, and in despair has flung herself into her old apartment, locked herself in, and through the key-hole Dorcas sees her on her knees, praying, I suppose, for a safe deliverance.

Why, here, this unkind Lady Betty, *with* the dear creature's knowledge, and this mad-headed cousin Montague, while she was employed in directing her package, have hurried away in the coach to their own lodgings, only, indeed, to put up some night-clothes and so forth, in order to attend their sweet cousin to Hampstead, and, no less to my surprise than hers, are not yet returned.

Hardly any pacifying her. The girl is wild with her own idle apprehensions.

I curse them both for their delay.

* * * *

Devil take them, again say I. They *promised* too they would not stay, because it was but two nights ago that a chariot was robbed at the foot of Hampstead Hill, which alarmed my fair one when told of it.

Oh, here's Lady Betty's servant with a billet.

“(To Robert Lovelace, Esq.)

“*Monday night.*

“EXCUSE us, dear nephew, I beseech you, to my dearest kinswoman. Miss Montague has been taken violently ill with fainting fits, one after another. The hurry of her joy, I believe, to find your dear lady so much surpass all expectation, and the eager desire she had to attend her, have occasioned it, for she has but weak spirits, poor girl, well as she looks.

“If she be better, we will certainly go with you to-morrow morning, after we have breakfasted with *her* at your lodgings. But whether she be or not, I will do myself the pleasure to attend your lady to Hampstead, and will be with you for that purpose about nine in the morning. With due compliments to your most worthily beloved, I am yours affectionately,

“ELIZABETH LAWRENCE.”

Faith and troth, Jack, I know not what to do, for just now, having sent in the above note by Dorcas, out came my beloved with it in her hand, in a fit of frenzy.

She had indeed complained of *her head* all the evening.

Dorcas ran to me out of breath to tell me that her lady was coming in some strange way, but she followed her so quick that the frightened wench had not time to say in what way.

It seems, when she read the billet, “Now indeed,” said she, “am I a lost creature. O the poor Clarissa Harlowe!”

She tore off her head-clothes, inquired where I was, and in she came, her shining tresses flowing about her neck, her ruffles torn and hanging in tatters about her snowy hands, with her arms spread out, her eyes wildly turned. Down sunk she at my feet, her charming bosom heaving to her uplifted face, and clasping her arms about my knees. “Dear Lovelace,” said she, “if ever—if ever—if ever—” and unable to speak another word, down prostrate on the floor sunk she.

I was quite astonished. I knew neither what to say or

do, but, recollecting myself, "Am I *again*," thought I, "to be made a fool of? If I now recede, I am gone for ever."

I raised her, but down she sunk, almost lifeless.

Never having met with such repugnance, I was confounded.

I lifted her into a chair, and in words of disordered passion told her all her fears were needless, besought her reliance on my faith and honour, and avowed all my old vows.

At last, with an heart-breaking sob, "I see, I see, Mr. Lovelace, that at last—at last—I am ruined! Ruined, if *your* pity—let me implore your pity," and down on her bosom, like a lily heavy with the dews of morning, sunk her head, with a sigh that went to my heart.

All I could think of to re-assure her, I said.

"Why did I not send for their coach as I had intimated? It might return in the morning for the ladies."

"I had actually done so," I told her; "but it was then gone to fetch a doctor for Miss Montague, lest his chariot should not be ready."

"Ah, Lovelace," said she, with a doubting face, anguish in her imploring eye.

Lady Betty would think it very strange, I told her, if she were to know it was so disagreeable to her to stay one night for *her* company in the house where she had passed *so many*.

She called me names upon this. I was patient.

Let her go to Lady Betty's lodgings, then; *directly* go, if the person I called Lady Betty was really Lady Betty.

"If, my dear. Good heavens! what a villain does that *if* show you believe me to be."

"I cannot help it. I beseech you once more let me go;" then assuming a more resolute spirit, "I will go by myself,"—and would have rushed by me.

I folded my arms about her to detain her, pleading the bad way I heard poor Charlotte was in, and what a farther concern her impatience, if she went, would give to poor Charlotte.

She would believe nothing—unless I ordered a coach and let her go to Hampstead, late as it was and all alone.

Dreading what might happen as to her intellects, I ordered Will to get a coach directly, to carry us to Hampstead.

Robbers, with whom I would have terrified her, she feared not. I was all her fear, I found, and this house her terror; for I saw plainly that she now believed that Lady Betty and Miss Montague were both impostors.

Let me perish, Belford, if she escape me now.

* * * *

Will is this moment returned. No coach to be got, either *for love or money*.

Once more she urges "Let me go, Lovelace, good Lovelace, let me go. What is Miss Montague's illness to my terror? For the Almighty's sake, Mr. Lovelace!" her hands clasped.

"O, my angel, what a wildness is this! Do you know, do you see, my dearest life, what appearance your apprehensions have given you? Do you know it is past eleven o'clock?"

"I care not, let me go out of this hated house."

* * * *

Just as she had repeated the last words "*let me go out of this hated house*," in came Mrs. Sinclair in a ferment. "And what, pray, madam, has *this house* done to you? Mr. Lovelace, you have known me some time; I hope I do not deserve to be treated thus. And, Mr. Lovelace," violently shaking her head, "if you are a gentleman and a man of honour——"

Having never before seen anything but obsequiousness in this woman, little as she liked her, she was frightened at her masculine air and fierce look.

"God help me," cried she, "what will become of me now?" then turning her head hither and thither, in a wild kind of amaze, "whom have I for a protector? What will become of me?"

"I will be your protector, my dearest love. But you are severe on Mrs. Sinclair. She is a gentlewoman, and though obliged to let lodgings, she would scorn a wilful baseness."

"I hope so—it may be so—I may be mistaken. But— but there is no crime, I presume, to say I don't like her house?"

I may be to blame, Jack, for suffering this wretch to give herself airs, but her coming in was without my orders.

And thus, between terror and the late hour, she was diverted from the thoughts of getting out of the house.

* * * *

(Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.)

Tuesday morning, June 13th.

AND now, Belford, I can go no farther. Clarissa lives. And I am your humble servant,

R. LOVELACE.

[Much of this black transaction is related by the injured lady to Miss Howe in her subsequent letter, dated Thursday, July 6th.]

(Belford to Lovelace.)

I AM inexpressibly concerned for the fate of this matchless lady, and cannot forbear writing to urge thee to make the only amends thou now canst, by a proper use of the license thou hast obtained.

Poor, poor lady. It is a pain to me that I ever saw her. Pride thyself in this reflection, that thy triumph over a woman, who for thy sake was abandoned of every friend she had in the world, was effected, not by advantages taken of her weakness and credulity, but by the blackest artifice, after a long course of studied deceits had been tried to no purpose.

I can tell thee it is well for thee that I am not the brother of the lady.

Clarissa lives! That she does is my wonder, and these words show that thou thyself hardly expected she would survive.

That thou couldst behold her frenzy on this occasion, and her prostration at thy feet, and yet retain thy evil purposes, will hardly be thought credible, even by those who know *thee*, if they had seen *her*.

Poor, poor lady!!!

* * * *

Prithee, dear Lovelace, if thou art a man and not a devil, resolve to repair thy sin.

Permit me the honour of being this fatherless lady's father at the altar. Then wilt thou bind to thee for ever thy

BELFORD.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Thursday, June 15th.

"LET me alone, you great dog, you—let me alone," so say I to thee, on occasion of thy severity to thy poor friend.

Belford, thou seest that I have journeyed on to this stage with one determined point in view from the first. To thy urgent supplication then, that I will do her grateful justice by marriage, let me answer in Matt Prior's two lines on his hoped-for auditorship, as put into the mouths of his St. John and Harley.

“ Let that be done, which Matt doth say.
 ‘ Yea,’ quoth the earl, ‘ BUT NOT TO-DAY.’ ”

Ah, Jack, what in the mean time shall I do with this admirable creature? At present—I am loth to say it—at present she is quite stupefied.

But I will leave this subject, lest it make you too grave.

* * * *

I have just now had a specimen of what the resentment of this dear creature will be when recovered. For, endeavouring to soothe and pacify her, she held up to Heaven in speechless agony the innocent license which she has in her own power, and seemed about to call down vengeance upon me, when, happily, the leaden god, in pity to her trembling Lovelace, waved over her half-drowned eyes his somniferous wand, and laid asleep the fair exclaimer.

* * * *

I do all in my power to quiet her spirits, when I force myself into her presence.

I would, at first, have persuaded her we were actually married, though the license was in her hands. I thought the assertion might go down.

But she believes nothing I say; nor, whether in her senses or not, bears me with patience in her sight.

I pity her with all my soul; and I curse myself when she is in her wailing fits, and when I apprehend that her intellects are for ever damped.

Last night, for the first time since Monday last, she got to her pen and ink; but she pursues her writing with such eagerness and hurry as show her discomposure.

I hope this employment will help to calm her spirits.

* * * *

Just now, Dorcas tells me, that what she writes she tears and throws under the table, either as not knowing what she does, or disliking it; then gets up, wrings her hands, weeps, and shifts her seat all round the room, then returns to her table, sits down, and writes again.

* * * *

One odd letter, as I may call it, Dorcas has this moment given me from her—“ *Carry this,*” said she, “ *to the vilest of men.*” I sat down, intending to give thee a copy of it; but, for my life, I cannot; ’tis so extravagant. And the original is too much an original to let it go out of my hands.

But some of the scraps and fragments I will copy.

(Paper 1.)

[*Torn in two pieces.*]

“MY DEAREST MISS HOWE!

“O what dreadful, dreadful things have I to tell you! But yet I cannot tell you neither. But say, are you really ill, as a vile creature informs me you are?

“But he never told me truth, and I hope has not in this; and yet, if it were not true, surely I should have heard from you before now! But what have I to do to upbraid? You may well be tired of me; and, if you are, I can forgive you; for I am tired of myself; and all my own relations were tired of me before you were.

“How good you have always been to me, mine own dear Anna Howe! But how I ramble.

“I sat down to say a great deal; my heart was full—I did not know what to say first; and thought, and grief, and confusion, and, O my poor head! I cannot tell what—and thought, and grief, and confusion, came crowding so thick upon me, *one* would be first, *another* would be first, *all* would be first; so I can write nothing at all. Only that, whatever they have done I cannot tell; but I am no longer what I was. Yes, but I am; for I am still, and I ever will be, your true

“C. H.”

* * * *

I can write no more of this eloquent nonsense. Dorcas shall transcribe the others; and, some time hence, and I can better bear to read them, I may ask thee for a sight of them. Preserve them, therefore, for we often look back with pleasure upon the heaviest griefs when the cause of them is removed.

(Paper 2.)

[*Scratched through, and thrown under the table.*]

“AND can you, my dear honoured papa, resolve for ever to reprobate your poor child? But I am sure you would not if you knew what she had suffered since her unhappy—and will nobody plead for your poor suffering girl? Why, then, dearest sir, let it be an act of your own goodness, which I have so much abused. I don’t presume to think you should receive me—no, indeed, my name is—I don’t know what my name is! I never dare to wish to come into your family again! But your heavy curse, my papa—yes, I *will* call you papa, for you *are* my own dear papa; and though I am an unworthy child, yet I *am* your child.”

(Paper 3.)

"How art thou now humbled in the dust, thou proud Clarissa Harlowe! Thou that never steppedst out of thy father's house but to be admired! Who wert wont to turn thine eye, sparkling with healthful life, to different objects thou passedst, as if to plume thyself upon applause! Thou couldst put off everything but thy vanity!"

(Paper 4.)

"REJOICE not now, my Bella, my sister, my friend; but pity the humbled creature, whose foolish heart you used to say you beheld through the thin veil of humility which covered it.

"It must have been so! my fall had not else been permitted.

"You knew me better than I knew myself.

"Hence your upbraidings when I began to totter.

"Forgive now those vain triumphs of my heart.

"I was too secure in the knowledge I thought I had of my own heart.

"My supposed advantages became a snare to me.

"And what now is the end of all?"

(Paper 5.)

"THOU pernicious caterpillar!

"Thou fell blight, thou mildew, that destroyest the early promises of the shining year!

"Thou fretting moth!

"Thou canker-worm, that preyest upon the bud, and turnest the damask rose into livid yellowness!

"If, as religion teaches us, God will judge us, in a great measure, by our benevolent or evil actions to one another—O wretch! bethink thee, how great must be thy condemnation!"

(Paper 6.)

"At first, I saw something in your air and person that displeased me not. You acted not ignobly by my passionate brother. Everybody said you were brave and generous. A *brave* man, I thought, could not be a *base* man: a *generous* man could not be *ungenerous*. Thus prepossessed, all the rest that my soul loved and wished for in your reformation, I hoped!—I knew not any flagrant instances of your vileness.

"My fortune, my rank, my character, I thought a security. Your vows, your imprecations! But, O! you have bar-

barously and basely conspired against what you ought to have protected ; and now what is it of vile that you have *not* made me ?

“ Yet, God knows my heart, I honoured virtue—I hated vice ! I knew not that you were vice itself !

* * * *

“ Who now shall pity the poor wretch who has increased the number of the miserable ? ”

(*Lovelace in continuation.*)

I have just skimmed over these transcriptions, and I see there are method and good sense in some of them, wild as others are, and that her memory is far from being impaired. This gives me hope that she will soon recover her charming intellects—though I shall be the sufferer by their restoration, I make no doubt.

But, in the letter she wrote to me, there are greater extravagances ; and though I said it was too affecting to give thee a copy of it, yet, after I have let thee see the loose papers enclosed, I think I may throw in a transcript of that.

“(To Mr. Lovelace.)

“ I NEVER intended to write another line to you. I would not see you if I could help it. O that I never had !

“ But tell me of a truth, is Miss Howe really ill ? very ill ? And is not her illness poison ? and don't *you* know who gave it her ?

“ What you, or Mrs. Sinclair, or I cannot tell who, have done to my poor head, you best know ; but I shall never be what I was. My head is gone. I have wept away all my brain, I believe, for I can weep no more. I have had my full share ; so it is no matter.

“ But, Lovelace, don't set Mrs. Sinclair upon me again. I never did her any harm. She *so* affrights me when I see her ! She may be a good woman. She was the wife of a man of honour—very likely—though forced to let lodgings. Poor gentlewoman ! Let her know I pity her ; but don't let her come near me again—pray don't !

“ Yet she may be a very good woman.

“ I forget what I was going to say.

“ O Lovelace, you are Satan himself, or he helps you out in everything ; and that's as bad !

“ But have you really and truly sold yourself to him ? And for how long ?

"Poor man! the contract *will* be out; and then what will be your fate!

"O Lovelace! if you could be sorry for yourself, I would be sorry too. But when all my doors are fast, and nothing but the keyhole open, and the key of fate put into that, to be where you are, in a manner without opening any of them. O wretched, wretched Clarissa Harlowe!

"For I never will be Lovelace's.

"Well, but now I remember what I was going to say. It is for *your* good—not *mine*. For nothing can do me good now! O thou hated Lovelace!

"But Mrs. Sinclair may be a good woman. But don't let her bluster to me again! O she is a frightful woman! If she *be* a woman! She needed not to put on that *fearful mask* to scare me out of my poor wits. But don't tell her what I say; I have no hatred to her. It is only foolish fear, that's all. She may not *be* a bad woman.

"Alas, you have killed my head! God forgive you. But had it not been better to have put me out of your way at once? You might safely have done it, for nobody would require me at your hands, except, indeed, Miss Howe would have said, when she should see you, 'What, Lovelace, have you done with Clarissa Harlowe?' and then you could have given any gay answer. 'Sent her beyond sea,' or 'She has run away from me,' and this would have been easily credited.

"But this is nothing to what I wanted to say.

* * * *

"I have lost it again. For what purpose should I eat? For what end wish to live? I tell thee, Dorcas, I will neither eat nor drink.

* * * *

"I will do as you'd have me. Good Dorcas, look not on me so fiercely.

"Mr. Lovelace, now that I remember what I took pen in hand to say, let me hurry off my thoughts, lest I lose them again. I know my head is not as it should be, therefore let me propose one thing to you—it is for *your* good.

"I never shall be myself again. I have been a wicked creature. Now I am punished, so let me be carried out of this house, and put into Bedlam privately. Then I shall be out of your way, and taken care of, and bread and water, without your tormentings, will be dainties.

"My clothes will sell for what will keep me, as long as I

live. But, Lovelace, *dear* Lovelace, don't let me be made a show of, for when I know all I have suffered, which I do not, I may be apt to rave against you by name, and tell of your baseness to a poor creature.

"So, suppose, instead of Bedlam, it were a private mad-house, where nobody comes?

"But 'another thing, Lovelace; don't let them use me cruelly when I am there. *You* have used me cruelly enough, you know. I will be very respectable.

"Another thing, Lovelace, and let me have pen and ink and paper; it will be all my amusement. But they need not send to anybody, because it will but trouble them, and somebody may do you mischief.

"You tell me that Lady Betty Lawrance and your cousin Montague were here to take leave of me, but that I was asleep, and could not be waked. You told me at first I was married, you know; and that you were my husband. Ah, Lovelace, look to what you say. But let not *that* Lady Betty, let not *that* Miss Montague, whatever the *real* ones may do, nor Mrs. Sinclair, nor her nieces come to see me. I say, Lovelace, I shall find out all your villainies in time, so put me there as soon as you can. It is for *your* good. Then all will pass for ravings that I say. You know *I began to be mad at Hampstead*, so you said. Ah, villainous man; what have you not to answer for!

* * * *

"A little interval seems to be lent me. I had begun to look over what I have written. It is not fit for any one to see, so far as I have been able to re-peruse it. My head will not hold to go through it all. If I have not mentioned my earnest desire, let me tell you it is *this*, that I be sent out of this abominable house without delay, and locked up in some private mad-house. Deny me not this my last request, I beseech you; and one other, and that is, never to let me see you more! This surely may be granted to the miserable

"C. H."

I will not bear thy heavy preachments, Belford, upon this affecting letter. The paper thou'lt see, is blistered with the tears even of the hardened transcriber, Dorcas.

If she escape a settled delirium when my plots unravel. I think it is all I ought to be concerned about.

* * * *

Saturday night.

By Dorcas's account of her lady's behaviour, the dear creature seems to be recovering.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Sunday, June 18th.

I WENT out early this morning, and returned just now, when I was informed that my beloved, in my absence, had taken it into her head to attempt to get away.

She tripped down, with a parcel tied up in a handkerchief, her hood on, and was actually in the entry, when Mrs. Sinclair saw her.

"Pray, madam," whipping between her and the street-door, "be pleased to let me know whither you are going."

"Who has a right to control me?" was the word.

"I have, madam, by order of your spouse, and I desire you will be pleased to walk up again."

She would have spoken, but could not; and bursting into tears, turned back, and went to her chamber.

This shows that she is recovering her charming intellects. Dorcas says she was visible to her but once the whole day, and then seemed very solemn and sedate.

I will endeavour to see her. It must be in her own chamber, I suppose, for she will hardly meet me in the dining-room. Sweet soul! methinks I have her before me—her face averted—speech lost in sighs—abashed. What a triumphant aspect will this give me, when I gaze in her downcast countenance!

* * * *

This moment Dorcas tells me she believes she is coming to find me out. She asked after me. Dorcas left her drying her eyes at her glass. (No design of moving me by tears!) That she cannot fly me, that she must see me, are circumstances greatly in my favour. What can she do but rave and exclaim? I am used to raving and exclaiming.

Here she comes.

Sunday night.

I HAVE only to tell thee, that I am too much awakened by her to think of sleep, were I to go to bed, and so shall have nothing to do but to write an account of our odd conversation, while it is so strong upon my mind that I can think of nothing else.

She was dressed in a white damask night-gown, with less negligence than for some days past. I was sitting with my pen in my fingers, and stood up when I first saw her, with great complaisance, as if the day were still her own. And so indeed it is.

She entered with such dignity in her manner, as struck me with great awe, and prepared me for the poor figure I made in the subsequent conversation. But I will do her justice.

She came up with quick steps, pretty close to me ; a white handkerchief in her hand ; her eyes neither fierce nor mild, but very earnest, and a fixed sedateness in her aspect, which seemed to be the effect of deep contemplation : and thus she accosted me, with an air I never saw equalled.

"You see before you, sir, the wretch, whose preference of you to all your sex you have rewarded as it *deserved* to be rewarded. My father's dreadful curse has already operated in the very letter of it, as to this life, and it seems to me too evident that it will not be your fault that it is not entirely completed in the loss of my soul as well as my honour, which you, villainous man, have robbed me of, with a baseness so inhuman——"

Here I made an effort to speak ; but she proceeded :—

"Hear me out, guilty wretch !—abandoned man ! Well mayest thou quake, tremble, and falter, when thou reflectest upon what I have suffered, and on the returns thou hast made me."

By my soul, Belford, my whole frame was shaken, for not only her looks and action, but her voice, so solemn, was inexpressibly affecting ; and then my cursed guilt, and her innocence, and rank, and superiority, stared me in the face so formidably, that my present account, to which she unexpectedly called me, seemed to resemble that general one, to which we are told we shall be summoned, when our conscience shall be our accuser.

She had had time to collect all the powers of her eloquence ; and I was the more disappointed, as I had thought I could have gazed her into confusion ; but it is plain that the sense she has of her wrongs sets this woman *above all weaker considerations*.

"My dear—my love—I—I—I never—no never—" Lips trembling, limbs quaking, voice inward, hesitating, broken. Never, surely, did miscreant look so *like* a miscreant, while thus she proceeded, waving her snowy hand with all the graces of moving oratory.

"I have no pride in this visible confusion. I have been all day praying for a composure, if I could not escape from this vile house, that should once more enable me to look on my destroyer with the consciousness of innocence. Thou seest me, since my wrongs are beyond the power of *words, calm enough* to wish that repentance may take hold of thee, that so thou mayest not forfeit all title to *that* mercy which thou hast not shown to the poor creature before thee.

"But tell me—for no doubt thou hast *some* scheme to pursue—since I am a prisoner in the vilest of houses, and have not a friend to protect me, what thou intendest shall become of the remnant of a life not worth keeping—tell me if there are more evils reserved for me, and whether thou hast entered into a compact with the grand deceiver, in the person of his horrid agent in this house, and if the ruin of my soul, that my father's curse may be fulfilled, is to complete the triumphs of so vile a confederacy? Answer me! Say, if thou hast courage to speak out to her whom thou hast ruined, tell me what *further* I am to suffer from thy barbarity."

She stopped here, and, sighing, turned her sweet face from me, drying up with her handkerchief those tears which she endeavoured to restrain, but could not conceal from my sight.

I had prepared myself for raving and execrations.—These transient violences, the workings of sudden grief and shame and vengeance, would have set us upon a par, and quitted scores. These, as nothing violent is lasting, I could have wished to encounter. But such a majestic composure—seeking me—whom yet, it is plain, by her attempt to get away, she would have avoided seeing. No Lucretia-like vengeance upon herself in her thought, yet her whole mind swallowed up by a grief so heavy, as to be beyond the power of speech to express, and to be able to put such a home question to me, as if she had penetrated my future view. How could I avoid looking like a fool, and answering in confusion?

"I—I—I—cannot but say—must own—confess—hem—hem. But I am truly—truly sorry—upon my soul I am—and—and—will do all—do everything incumbent upon me—all that you—that you require to make amends!"

"Amends! thou despicable wretch!"—then lifting up her eyes—"Good Heaven! who shall pity the creature who could fall by so base a mind! Yet"—and then she looked

indignantly upon me—"Yet I hate thee not, base as thou art! half so much as I hate myself, that I saw thee not sooner in thy proper colours—that I hoped either morality, gratitude, or humanity, from one who defies moral sanction."

She then called upon her cousin Morden's name, as if he had warned her against me, and walked towards the window, her handkerchief at her eyes; but, turning short towards me, with an air of mingled scorn and majesty: "What amends hast *thou* to propose!—what amends can such a one as thou make to a person of spirit or common sense, for the evils thou hast made me suffer?"

"As soon, madam—as soon as—"

"I know what thou wouldst tell me. But thinkest thou that *marriage will satisfy for a guilt like thine?* Destitute as thou hast made me both of friends and fortune, I too much despise the wretch *who could rob himself of his wife's virtue*, to endure the thoughts of thee, in the light thou seemest to hope I will accept thee."

I hazarded an interruption, but my meaning died away on my trembling lips. I could only pronounce the word *marriage*—and thus she proceeded:—

"Let me know whether I am to be controlled in the future disposal of myself. Whether in a country of liberty as *this*, where the *sovereign* of it must not be guilty of *your* wickedness, and where *you* durst not have attempted it, had I one friend or relation to look upon me, I am to be kept here a prisoner. Whether, in a word, you intend to hinder me from going whither my destiny shall lead me?"

After a pause, for I was still silent:—

"Can you not answer me this plain question? I quit all claim upon you. What right have you to detain me here?" I could not speak. What could I say?

"O wretch!" wringing her hands, "had I been able to account for myself, and your proceedings, or to have known how the days passed, a whole week should not have gone over my head, as I find it has done, before I had told you what I now tell you, *that the man who has been the villain to me you have been, shall never make me his wife*. All my prospects are shut in. I give myself up for a lost creature as to this world. Hinder me not from entering upon a life of penitence, for throwing myself into the power of your vile artifices. Let me try to secure the only hope I have left. This is all the amends I ask of you. I repeat, am I now at liberty to dispose of myself as I please?"

Now comes the fool, the miscreant, hesitating in his broken answer. "My dearest love, I am quite confounded. There is no withstanding your eloquence. Such irresistible proofs of the love of virtue *for its own sake* did I never hear of. If you can forgive a repentant villain, who thus on his knees implores your forgiveness,"—down I dropped, earnest in all I said—"I vow by all that's sacred (and may a thunderbolt strike me dead at your feet if I am not sincere!) that I will, by marriage, before to-morrow noon, without waiting for anybody, do you all the justice I can. And you shall ever after direct me as you please, till you have made me more worthy of your angelic purity; nor will I presume so much as to touch your garment till I can call so great a blessing lawfully mine."

"O thou guileful betrayer! There is a just God, whom thou invokest, yet the thunderbolt descends not, and thou livest to imprecate and deceive!"

"My dearest life!"—rising, for I hoped she was relenting.

"Hadst thou not sinned beyond the *possibility of forgiveness*," interrupted she, "the desperateness of my condition might have induced me to think of taking a wretched chance with a man so profligate. But it would be *criminal* to bind my soul in covenant to a man allied to perdition."

"Good God! I offer not to defend—would to Heaven that I could recall—*allied to perdition*, madam!"

"Such premeditation in thy baseness. And to prostitute the characters of ladies of thine own family, all to delude a poor creature whom thou oughtest—but why talk I to thee?—be thy crimes upon thy head. Once more I ask thee, am I, or am I not, at my own liberty *now*?"

I offered to speak in defence of the women, declaring that they really were the very persons——

"Presume not," interrupted she, "base as thou art, to say one word in thine own vindication on this head. I have been contemplating their behaviour, their conversation, their free yet affectedly reserved light manners, and now that I have compared facts and passages together, in the interval that has been lent me, I wonder I could not distinguish the behaviour of the woman thou broughtest to betray me, from the worthy lady whom thou hast the honour to call thy aunt, nor detect the creature whom thou passest upon me for Miss Montague."

"I do most solemnly vow, madam——"

"That they were," interrupting me, "*verily* and *indeed* Lady Betty Lawrance and thy cousin Montague! O wretch,

I see what credit ought to be given to all the rest. Had I no other proof—”

Interrupting her, I besought her patient ear. I had found myself, *I* told *her*, almost *avowedly* despised and hated. I had no hope of gaining her love or her confidence. The letter she had left behind her, on her removal to Hampstead, convinced me that she was entirely under Miss Howe's influence, and had waited but the return of a letter from her to enter upon measures that would deprive me of her for ever. Miss Howe had *ever* been my enemy.

She would not hear me further; indeed it was not without several angry interruptions that she heard me so far.

* * * *

“Would I dare to offer a palliation of my baseness? The women, she was convinced, were impostors. But whether *they* were so or not, *I* was. And she insisted upon being at her own disposal for the remainder of her short life. She abhorred me in every light; and more particularly in that in which I offered myself to her acceptance.”

And, saying this, she flung from me; leaving me shocked and confounded at her part of a conversation, which she began with such severe composure, and concluded with such sincere and unaffected indignation.

R. L.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Monday morning, 5 o'clock, June 19th.

I MUST write on to divert me.

I would fain have closed my eyes, but sleep flies me.

* * * *

It is now near six. The sun for two hours past has been illuminating everything about me; for that impartial orb shines upon Mother Sinclair's house as well as upon any other; but nothing within me can it illuminate.

At day-dawn I looked through the keyhole of my beloved's door. She had declared she would not put off her clothes any more in this house. There I beheld her in a sweet slumber, which I hope will prove refreshing to her disturbed senses; sitting in her elbow-chair, her apron over her head, her head supported by one sweet hand, the other hand hanging down upon her side, in a sleepy lifelessness, half of one pretty foot only visible.

"See the difference in our cases," thought I; "she, the charming injured, can sweetly sleep, while the varlet injurer cannot close his eyes, and has been trying to no purpose the whole night to divert his melancholy and to fly from himself."

Six o'clock.

Just now Dorcas tells me that her lady is preparing openly, and without disguise, to be gone. Very probable. The humour she flew away from me in last night has given me expectation of such an enterprise.

Now, Jack, to be thus hated and despised!

* * * *

But she has sent a message by me to Dorcas, that she will meet me in the dining-room, and desires (odd enough!) that the wench may be present at the conversation that shall pass between us. This message gives me hope.

Nine o'clock.

Confounded art, cunning villainy! By my soul, she had like to have slipt through my fingers! She meant nothing by her message but to get Dorcas out of the way.

But her haste betrayed her; for Sally Martin, happening to be in the parlour, and hearing a rustling of silks, looked out, and seeing who it was, stepped between her and the door, and set her back against it.

"You must not go, madam; indeed you must not."

"By what right—and how dare you?" And such-like imperious airs the dear creature gave herself; while Sally called out for her aunt, and half a dozen voices joined instantly in the cry for me to hasten down in a moment.

I was gravely instructing Dorcas above-stairs, and wondering what would be the subject of the conversation to which the wench was to be a witness, when these outcries reached my ears. Down I flew; and there was the charming creature, the deceiver, panting for breath, her back against the partition, a parcel in her hand (women make no excursions without their parcels), Sally, Polly, the mother, Mabel, and Peter (the footman of the house), about her, all, however, keeping their distance—the mother and Sally between her and the door; in her soft rage the dear soul repeating, "I *will* go—nobody has a right—I *will* go! If you kill me, women, I won't go up again!"

As soon as she saw me, she stepped a pace or two towards me. "Mr. Lovelace, I *will* go," said she. "Do you

authorize these women—what right have they, or *you* either, to stop me?”

“Is this, my dear, preparative to the conversation you led me to expect in the dining-room? And do you think I can part with you thus? do you think I will?”

“And am I, sir, to be thus beset? What have these women to do with me?”

I desired them to leave us, all but Dorcas, who was down as soon as I. I then thought it right to assume an air of resolution. “And now, my dear,” said I (urging her reluctant feet), “be pleased to walk into the fore-parlour. Here, since you will not go upstairs, we may *hold our parley*, and Dorcas *be witness to it*. And now, madam,” seating her, “your pleasure.”

“Insolent villain!” said the furious lady, and, rising, ran to the window, and threw up the sash (she knew not, I suppose, that there were iron rails before the windows). And, when she found she could not get out into the street, clasping her uplifted hands together, having dropped her parcel. “For the love of God, good honest man! For the love of God, mistress” (to two passers-by), “a poor, a poor creature,” said she, “ruined!”

I clasped her in my arms—people beginning to gather about the window, and then she cried out, “Murder! Help! help!”—and carried her to the dining-room, in spite of her little plotting heart, although she struggled, catching hold of the banisters as she could. I would have seated her there, but she sank down half-motionless, pale as ashes, and a violent burst of tears happily relieved her.

Dorcas wept over her. The wench was actually moved for her!

Violent hysterics succeeded. I left her to Mabel, Dorcas, and Polly—the latter the most supportable to her of the sisterhood.

This attempt, so resolutely made, alarmed me not a little.

Mrs. Sinclair is much more concerned, because of the reputation of the house, having received some insults (broken windows threatened) to make her produce the young creature who cried out.

While the mobbish inquisitors were in the height of their office, the women came running up to me, to know what they should do—a constable being actually fetched.

“Get the constable into the parlour,” said I, “with three or four of the mob, and produce one of the women in a moment, with disordered head-dress and handkerchief, and

let her own herself the person: the occasion, a female skirmish, but satisfied with the justice done her. Then give a dram or two to each fellow, and all will be well."

Eleven o'clock.

All done as I advised, and all is well.

Mrs. Sinclair wishes she never had seen the face of so skittish a lady, and is extremely pressing with me to leave the perverse beauty for four or five days; but I cursed them into silence, and double precaution for the future.

Dorcas was challenged upon her tears. She owned them real, said she was ashamed of herself, but could not help it. So sincere, so *unyielding* a grief, in so *sweet* a lady!

The women laughed at her; but I bid her make no apologies for her tears, nor mind their laughing. I was glad to see them *so ready*. Good use might be made of such strangers.

She said that her lady *did* take kind notice of them to her, and was glad to see such tokens of humanity in her.

"Well, then," said I, "*your* part, whether anything come of it or not, is to be *tender-hearted*. It can do no harm, if no good. But take care you are not *too suddenly* or too *officiously* compassionate."

I am confoundedly out of conceit with myself. I am egregiously overmatched by this woman. What to do with her or without her I know not.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

I HAVE this moment intelligence that Lord M. is very ill.

No bad prospects for this charming creature, if the old peer would be so kind as to surrender; eight thousand a year and the title reversionary would help me up with her.

Proud as this lady pretends to be above all pride, grandeur will have its charms. Grandeur always makes a man's face shine in a woman's eye. What mischief will £8,000 a year enable a man to do!

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At last am I to be admitted to my angry fair one, after three denials, and a *peremptory* from me, by Dorcas, that I must see her in her chamber, if I cannot see her in the dining-room.

Dorcas, however, tells me that she says, if she were at her own liberty, she would never see me more.

She will have it now that I had the wickedness from the beginning to contrive for her ruin.

Dorcas begs of her to be pacified. Tells her that I am one of the most determined of men. That gentleness may do with me; nothing else will. And what, as her ladyship, as she always calls her, is *married*, if I *had* broken my oath, or *intended* to break it.

She hinted plain enough that she was *not* married, but Dorcas would not understand her.

This shows that she is resolved to keep no measures. And now for a trial of skill!

Dorcas has hinted to her my lord's illness, as a piece of intelligence that dropped me.

But here I stop. My beloved, pursuant to my peremptory message, is just gone up into the dining-room.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Monday afternoon.

PITY me, Jack, since, if thou dost not, nobody else will.

She began with me like a true woman [*She* in the fault, *I* to be blamed]—not the least apology for the uproar she had made, and the trouble she had given me.

"I come," said she, "into thy detested presence because I cannot help it. But why am I to be imprisoned here? Although to no purpose, I cannot help——"

"Dearest madam," interrupted I, "give not way to such violence. You must know that your detention is owing to the desire I have to make you all the amends in my power. Surely there is still *one* way left to repair the wrongs you have suffered."

"Canst thou blot out the past week?—*several* weeks past, I should say; ever since I have been with thee? Canst thou call back time?"

"Surely, madam," again interrupting her, "if I may be permitted to call you *legally* mine, I might have but anticipated——"

"Wretch that thou art! say not another word upon this subject. When thou vowedst, at Hampstead, I had begun to think that I must be thine. If I had consented, at the request of those I thought thy relations, this would have been a principal inducement, that I could then have brought thee, what was *most* wanted, an unsullied honour in dowry, to a wretch destitute of honour; and could have met the gratulations of a family to which thy life has been a disgrace, with a consciousness of *deserving* their gratulations. But," lifting up her clasped hands, "great and good God of Heaven,"

said she, "give me patience to support myself under the weight of those afflictions which Thou, for wise and good ends, though at present impenetrable by me, hast permitted!"

Then, turning towards me, who knew neither what to say to her nor *for* myself, "I renounce thee for ever, Lovelace! Abhorred of my soul! for ever I renounce thee! Seek thy fortunes wheresoever thou wilt! hinder me not from going whither my mysterious destiny shall lead me.

"What right have you to stop me, and bring me up by force, my hands and arms bruised with violence? What right have you to detain me?"

"I am cut to the heart, madam. I am but too sensible of the wrong; I have done you, or I could not *bear* your reproaches. Yet, if you think yourself in my power, I would caution you not to make me desperate. For you *shall* be mine, or my life shall be the forfeit! Nor is life worth having without you!"

"Be *thine*! I be *thine*!" said the passionate beauty. O how lovely in her violence!

"Yes, you *shall* be mine! My very crime is your glory. My love and admiration are increased by what has passed. I am willing to court your favour; but let me tell you, were the house beset by a thousand armed men, resolved to take you from me, they should not effect their purpose while I had life."

"I never will be yours," said she, clasping her hands, and lifting up her eyes! "I never will be yours!"

"We may yet see many happy years, madam. Enjoin but the terms I can make my peace with you upon, and I will instantly comply."

"Never, never," repeated she.

"Only forgive me, my dearest life, this *one* time!—

"Hear me out, I beseech you, madam;" for she was going to speak. "The God whom you serve requires repentance and amendment. Imitate *Him*, and bless me with the *means* of reforming a course of life that begins to be hateful to me. Let to-morrow's sun be witness to our espousals."

"I cannot judge thee," said she; "but the God to whom thou so boldly referrest, can; and assure thyself He will. But if, *indeed*, thou meanest anything by pleading the holy example thou recommendest to my imitation, let me sift thee, and by thy answer I shall judge of the sincerity of thy declarations.

"Thou knowest the opinion I have of the women thou

broughtest to me at Hampstead, and who seduced me hither ; let me ask thee if, *really* and *truly*, they were Lady Betty Lawrance and thy cousin Montague ? ”

“ Astonishing, my dear, that you should suspect them ! But, knowing your strange opinion of them, what can I say to be believed ? ”

“ And dost thou *thus* evade my question ? Let me know, I repeat, whether those women be *really* Lady Betty Lawrance and thy cousin Montague ? ”

“ Let me, my dearest love, be enabled to-morrow to call you lawfully mine, and we will set out the next day, if you please, to Lord M.’s, where they both are at this time ; and you shall convince yourself by your own eyes and ears. ”

Belford, I swore (*lover’s oaths, Jack*), that they were really and truly Lady Betty Lawrance and my cousin Montague.

She lifted up her hands and eyes—“ What can I think ! What *can* I think ! ”

“ You *think* me a devil, madam ; or you could not, after you have put these questions to me, seem to doubt the truth of answers so solemnly sworn to. ”

“ And if I do, have I not cause ? Is there another man in the world who could act by any poor friendless creature as thou hast acted by *me* ? ”

* * * *

“ It signifies nothing now, *who* or *what* they are ; but if thou hast averred thus solemnly to two falsehoods, what a wretch do I see before me ! ”

I begged her to allow me to talk to her of to-morrow, as of the happiest day of my life. “ We have the license, madam. I cannot let you go hence till I have tried every way to obtain your forgiveness. ”

“ And am I then ” (with a kind of frantic wildness) “ to be detained a prisoner in this horrid house ; am I, sir ? Take care ! take care ! ” holding up her hand, menacing, “ how you make me desperate ! If I fall, though by my own hand, inquisition will be made for my blood ; and, Lovelace, if it *should* be so, make *sure* work, dig a hole deep enough to conceal this unhappy body ; for, depend upon it, that some of those who will not stir to protect me living, will move heaven and earth to avenge me dead ! ”

By my soul, she made me shudder ! She is the only *woman* in the world who could have shocked me as she has done. I think I have the *worst* of it.

“ Lie down, pen, for a moment ! ”

In continuation.)

I urged her to meet me next day at the altar in either of the two churches mentioned in the license; and besought her, whatever were her resolution, to let me debate this matter calmly with her.

If, she said, I would have her give what I desired the least moment's consideration, I must not hinder her from being her own mistress.

"Will you give me your honour, madam, if I consent to your quitting a house so disagreeable to you?—"

"My honour, sir!" said the dear creature—"Alas!"—And turned weeping from me.

I hoped her angry passions were subsiding; but I was mistaken: for urging her warmly for the day, in this strain she answered me:—

"And canst thou, Lovelace, be so *mean*—as to wish a wife of the creature thou hast dishonoured? Was it necessary to humble me to the level of thy baseness before I could be a wife meet for thee? Thou hadst a father who was a man of honour; a mother who deserved a better son. Thou hast an uncle who is no dishonour to the peerage of a kingdom whose peers are more respectable than the nobility of any other country. Thou hast other relations who may be *thy* boast, though thou canst not be *theirs*—and canst thou not imagine that thou hearest them calling upon thee; the dead from their monuments; the living from their pride; not to dishonour thy ancient house by entering into wedlock with a creature whom thou hast classed with the vilest of her sex?"

I extolled her greatness of soul. I execrated myself, and told her how grateful to the *manes* of my ancestors, as well as to the wishes of the living, the honour I supplicated for would be.

But she insisted upon being free before she would give what I urged the *least* consideration. Nor would she promise me, even then, to permit my visits. How then, as I asked her, could I comply, without resolving to lose her for ever?

She put her hand to her forehead often as she talked; and at last, pleading disorder, retired, neither of us satisfied with the other.

Dorcas seems to be coming into favour with her.

"What now! what now!"

Monday night.

How determined is this lady! Again had she like to have escaped us! What a fixed resentment! She only, I find, assumed a little calm, in order to quiet suspicion. She was got down, and had unbolted the street door before I could get to her, yet lightning was not quicker than I.

I brought her back to the dining-room, with infinite reluctance on her part. And before her face, ordered a servant to be placed constantly at the bottom of the stairs for the future.

She seemed choked with grief and disappointment.

Dorcas was exceedingly assiduous, and gave it as her own opinion that her dear lady should be permitted to go to another lodging, since *this* was so disagreeable to her; were she to be killed for saying so, she would say it. And was *good* Dorcas for this afterwards.

For some time the dear creature was all passion and violence.

She wrung her hands; she disordered her head-dress; she tore her ruffles. She was in a frenzy.

I dreaded her returning malady; but entreaty exasperating, I affected an angry air, and was menacing on, in hopes to intimidate her, when, dropping down at my feet—

"'Twill be," said she, "the highest act of mercy you can do to kill me outright on this spot." Then, baring, with a still more frantic violence, her neck, "Here, here," said the soul-harrowing beauty, "let thy pointed mercy enter, and I will thank thee, and forgive thee all the dreadful past. With my latest gasp will I forgive and thank thee. Or help *me* to the means, and I will myself put out of thy way so miserable a wretch."

"Why this extravagant passion? why these exclamations, my dearest life? What a frenzy is this!—

"Had I not reason to hope that you were meditating upon the means of making me happy, and yourself not miserable, rather than upon a flight so causeless and so precipitate?"

"No, no, no, no," shaking her head wildly, as resolved not to attend to what I said.

"My resolutions are honourable; but this moment I will send for a minister to put an end to all your doubts and fears."

"Say this, and a thousand times more. Were *not* my heart to abhor thee for thy *perjuries*, I tell thee I would

not bind my soul in covenant with thee for a thousand worlds."

"Compose yourself. Permit me to raise you up, *abhorred* as I am of your soul.

"Nay, if I must not touch you"—for she wildly slapped my hands, but with such a sweet, passionate air, as she looked up to me, that although I was sincerely enraged, I could with transport have pressed her to my heart—"If I must not touch you, I will not; but depend upon it" (and I assumed the sternest air I could assume to try what *that* would do)—"depend upon it, madam, that this is not the way to avoid the evils you dread. Let me do what I will, I cannot be used worse. Dorcas, be gone!"

She arose, and wildly caught hold of Dorcas's arm—"Oh, Dorcas! leave me not, I charge thee!" Then down she threw herself upon her knees, in the furthest corner of the room. "Oh, where can I be safe? Where—where can I be safe from this man of violence?"

This gave Dorcas an opportunity to confirm herself in her lady's confidence: the wench threw herself at my feet, I in violent wrath; and, embracing my knees, "Kill me, sir, kill me, sir, if you please! I must save my lady. I beg your pardon, sir—but, sir, spare my lady, I beseech you."

I see that the sweet creature is but a pretty coward at bottom, and that I can terrify her out of her virulence whenever I put on sternness and anger.

* * * *

The lady tells Dorcas that her heart is broken, and that she shall live but a little while. I think nothing of that if we marry. A few months' heart's-ease will give my charmer quite a different notion of things; and I dare say, "Once married, and I am married for life."

(Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.)

Tuesday morning, June 20th.

WELL, Jack, now are we upon another footing together. This dear creature will not *let me be good*.

Wouldst thou have thought it? Taking advantage of Dorcas's compassionate temper, and of some warm expressions which the tender-hearted wench let fall about wishing to serve her, has she given her the following note, signed by her maiden name; for she has thought fit, in positive and plain words, to own that she is not married.

"Monday, June 19th.

"I, the underwritten, do hereby promise that, on my coming into possession of my own estate, I will provide for Dorcas Martindale in a gentlewoman-like manner, in my own house; or, if I do not soon obtain that possession, or should first die, I do hereby bind myself, my executors and administrators, to pay to her, or her order, during the term of her natural life, the sum of twenty pounds by the year, on condition that she faithfully assist me in my escape from an illegal confinement under which I now labour, the first quarterly payment to commence immediately following the day of my deliverance. And I do also promise to give her, as a testimony of my honour in the rest, a diamond ring, which I have showed her. Witness my hand, this nineteenth day of June, in the year above-written.

"CLARISSA HARLOWE."

Now, Jack, what terms wouldst thou have me to keep? Seest thou not how she hates me, and seest thou not that, in this flimsy contrivance, the dear implacable catches at a straw to save herself! A straw shall she find the refuge she has resorted to.

(Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.)

Tuesday morning, 10 o'clock.

VERY ill, exceeding ill, Dorcas tells me, in order to avoid seeing me.

* * * *

I insisted upon visiting my fair one. Dorcas made excuses for her. I cursed the wench in her hearing for impertinence; and made a clutter, which was improved into an apprehension to the lady that I would have flung her confidante from the top of the stairs to the bottom.

"He is a violent wretch; but, dear Dorcas, thou shalt have a friend in me to the last day of my life."

And what now, Jack, dost think the name of her *good* angel is. Why Dorcas Martindale (no more Wykes) and the dear creature has bound her by the *most solemn* obligations, *besides* the tie of interest.

"Whither, madam, do you design to go when you get out of this house?"

"I will throw myself into the first open house I can find,

and beg protection till I can get a coach, or a lodging in some honest family."

"What will you do for clothes, madam?"

"Oh, no matter for clothes, if I can but get out of this house."

"What will you do for money, madam?"

"Oh, I have rings and other valuables. I have one dear friend left, if she be living, and as I hope in God she is, to whom I can be obliged if I want. Oh! Dorcas, I must ere now have heard from her if I had had fair play."

"Well, madam, yours is a hard lot. I pity you at my heart."

"I pitied you, madam, often; but you were always diffident of me. And then I doubted not but you were married, and I thought his honour was unkindly used by you. So I thought it my duty to wish well to his honour. Would to heaven that I had known before you were not married. Such a lady, such a fortune, to be so sadly betrayed!"

"Ah, Dorcas, I was basely drawn in! My youth, my ignorance of the world. And I have some things to reproach myself with."

"Lord, madam, what deceitful creatures are these men! Neither oaths, nor vows—I am sure—I am sure! I may curse the time that I came into this house."

"Poor Dorcas! How little do we, who have lived all our time in the country, know of this wicked town."

"Had I been able to write," cried the veteran wench, "I should certainly have given some relations I have in Wales a little inkling of matters."

Then, sobbing, she lifted her apron to her face again. She showed me how.

"Poor Dorcas," said my charmer, again wiping her eyes.

(Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.)

Tuesday night, June 20th.

No admittance yet; she is very ill.

Dorcas tells her how much I am concerned.

(Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.)

Wednesday.

OBLIGED, against her will, to meet me in the dining-room, I expected the dear perverse would begin with indignation. But I was in hopes, from the time she had to reflect, that she would not have carried it so strongly as she did.

As I entered I congratulated her on her *sudden* recovery, and would have taken her hand.

She turned from me with an indignant aspect. "I meet you once more," said she, "because I cannot help it. What have you to say to me? Why am I to be thus detained against my will?"

With the utmost solemnity I urged the ceremony. I saw I had nothing else for it.

I urged her to bless me to-morrow or Friday morning.

"Oh, Lovelace," cried she, "what honour, what faith may I expect from such a man as thou hast shown thyself to be?"

I was touched to the quick.

* * * *

Said she, "Why, once more I ask you, am I detained in this house? Do not I see myself surrounded by wretches who——?"

She should be loth, I said, that Mrs. Sinclair and her nieces should be called up to vindicate their house.

"Would they but kill me, let them come. I will bless the hand that strikes the blow!"

"Tis idle to talk of dying. Let me beseech you, dearest creature."

"Beseech me nothing, unhappy creature that I am," said she, in a kind of frenzy, wringing her hands and turning from me. "Thy curse, O my cruel father, seems to be now in the height of its operation. My mind is full of forebodings. Blessed, blessed God," said she, falling on her knees, "save me, oh, save me, from this man!"

I sunk down on my knees, excessively affected. "Forgive me, my dearest creature, what is past, on this condition, that my future faith and honour——"

She interrupted me, rising. "If you mean to beg of me never to seek to avenge myself by law."

"D—n the law," rising. She started. "All I beg is your forgiveness."

"No!" lifting up her hands, "I never *will*, and it is a punishment worse than death to me that I am obliged to see you."

I took hold of her gown, for she was going from me.

"Be remorse thy portion. I never will forgive thee, I never will be thine!"

"Passionate beauty!" still holding her.

"Oh, that I could avoid looking down upon thee, mean groveller. My soul is in tumults! Let me withdraw."

I quitted my hold. "Withdraw, sovereign of my fate.
Your scorn augments my love."

She flew from me. I, the reptile kneeler, no more the
proud victor, arose; and tried to comfort myself.

* * * *

Oh that she would forgive me, and receive my vows at the
altar.

* * * *

Wednesday night.

A MAN is just now arrived from M. Hall, who tells me
that my lord is in a dangerous way. The gout is in his
stomach.

The fellow was sent upon other business, but stretched his
orders a little to make his court to a successor.

As I know the old peer has a good deal of cash, of which
he keeps no account, it behoves me to go down soon. But
what shall I do with this dear creature the while? I am
afraid she will make me desperate.

I have sent to implore her company—denied with scorn!

* * * *

Dorcas tells me that she has just now had a *searching* con-
versation with her lady. She is willing, she tells the wench,
still to place her confidence in her. Dorcas hopes she has re-
assured her, but wishes me not to depend upon it.

This charming creature puzzles me.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Thursday noon, June 22nd.

At my request she met me at six this morning; and
charmingly she looked, but not favourably upon me. A
cloud hung upon her brow at her entrance; a great solemnity
in her features.

"Your air, my beloved, is not propitious," said I. "Let
me beg, before you speak, to forbear recriminations."

"I have been endeavouring," said she, "*since I am not
permitted to avoid you*, to obtain some composure. I hope I
shall be able to speak to you without that vehemence which
I expressed yesterday, and could not help it.*"

"I have told you that I never *will* be yours. All vengeance,
nevertheless, I disclaim. I want but to hide myself from

* The lady, in her minutes, says, "I fear Dorcas is a false one."

you and every one who once loved me. The desire lately so near my heart of a reconciliation with my friends is abated. I think myself unworthy of their favour. In my anguish I conjure you, Lovelace (tears in her eyes), to leave me to my fate.

"I will leave to Providence the direction of my future steps. I am sensible of my destitute condition. By your means I have lost them all. You have been a barbarous enemy to me."

* * * *

It was impossible for me, I told her, to comply. I could not live without her. I communicated my lord's illness, besought her to bless me with her consent, and after the ceremony, to accompany me down to Berks.

This, thou wilt own, was a princely offer. And I was resolved to be as good as my word.

* * * *

She hesitated. And this set my heart at my mouth.

"I hope," said I, snatching her hand, "your silence bodes me good."

"Mr. Lovelace," said she, solemnly, "I am too much in your power to say what I will *do*; but, as a testimony that you mean me well, let me quit this house, and I will then give you such an answer as befits my unhappy circumstances."

Imaginest thou, fairest, thought I, that this will go down with a Lovelace.

I pleaded that if we joined hands *this morning, to-morrow*, or on *Thursday*, and afterwards set out for Berks, we should, of course, quit the house.

She answered me with tears and sighs; but, looking in her face, I plainly perceived that it was resentment, not bashfulness, that was struggling in her bosom.

At last she broke silence—"I have no patience," said she. "Tell me, sir, whether it be your intention to permit me the freedom which is my birthright as an English subject?"

"Will not the consequence of your departure hence be that I shall lose you for ever, madam? And can I bear the thoughts of that?"

She flung from me. "My soul disdains to hold parley with thee," were her violent words. I began to imprecate, to vow, to promise. But thus the passionate beauty, interrupting me, went on:—

"I am sick of thee, MAN,* and of one continued string of vows and oaths. My heart rises against thee, base and ungrateful as thou art."

I was speechless!

I let go her hand. She took two or three turns across the room, her whole haughty soul in her air. Then approaching me in a milder voice, "I see thy conclusion, Lovelace. I have but one request—that thou wilt this moment permit me to quit this house. Adieu, then, let me say, for *ever* adieu! And mayst thou enjoy that happiness in this world which thou hast robbed me of."

And away she flung, leaving me in confusion.

Dorcas soon roused me. "Do you know, sir," running in, "that my lady is gone downstairs?"

Down I flew, and found her once more at the street-door.

She rushed into the fore parlour, and flew to the window, attempting once more to throw up the sash. "Good people! Good people!" cried she.

I caught her in my arms, and lifted her from the window. But being afraid of hurting her, she slid through my arms on the floor. "Let me die here! let me die" were her words. Sally and Mrs. Sinclair hurried in.

She was terrified at the sight of the old wretch; while I appealed,—“Bear witness, Mrs. Sinclair! Every one bear witness, that I offer not violence to this beloved creature.”

"O house," cried she, looking round her, "contrived on purpose for my ruin; but let not that woman come into my presence."

* * * *

"Oh, sir! oh, madam!" vociferated the woman, "what ado's here about nothing. I never knew such work in my life between a chicken of a gentleman and a tiger of a lady!"

She was affrighted, and upstairs she hastened.

I followed her up. She rushed by her own apartment into the dining-room; no terror can make her forget her punctilio.

To recite what passed there of invective threatenings, even of her life, would be too affecting, and may as well be imagined as expressed.

* This lady, in her minutes, owns the difficulty she lay under to keep her temper in this conference. "But when I found," says she, "that all my entreaties were ineffectual, and that he was resolved to detain me, I could no longer withhold my impatience."

I have another private intimation that the old peer is in great danger.

I must go down. Yet what to do with this lady? She will never be easy with these women in my absence.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

June 23rd.

I WENT out early this morning, and on my return found Simon Parsons, my lord's bailiff, waiting for me to press me to go down at my lord's desire. He wants to see me before he dies.

Simon has brought my lord's chariot-and-six, perhaps *my own* by this time. I have ordered it for four to-morrow morning.

Dorcas had acquainted her lady with Simon's arrival and errand. My beloved desired to see him. But my coming in prevented his attendance, just as Dorcas was instructing him.

I am to be admitted to her presence.

She is in the dining-room.

* * * *

Nothing will do. I can procure no favour.

* * * *

And here am I engrossed by this lady, while Lord M. lies groaning.

* * * *

She had hardly got into her chamber, but I found a little paper, as I was going into mine, which I took up, and opening it, what should it be but a promissory note, as a bribe, with a promise of a diamond-ring, to induce Dorcas to favour her mistress's escape?

Ring, ring, ring, ring I my bell, with a violence enough to break the string.

Every one frightened, the whole house in an uproar. Up runs Will, "Sir—sir,—sir!"—eyes distended—"Bid Dorcas come hither," as I stood at the stair-head, cried I.

In sight came the trembling devil—standing aloof, from the report made of the passion I was in.

Flash came out my sword immediately, for I had it ready on—"Cursed, confounded, villainous bribery and corruption."

Up runs she to her lady's door, screaming out for protection.

"Good, your honour," interposed Will, "for God's sake!—O Lord! O Lord!"—receiving a good cuff.

"Take that, varlet."

Up ran two or three—"What's the matter! What's the matter!"

"*The matter!*" for my beloved opened not the door, but drew another bolt,—"*this abominable Dorcas* has taken a bribe to betray her trust, to perpetuate a quarrel between man and wife, and frustrate all hopes of reconciliation between us!"

Let me perish, Belford, if I have patience to proceed with the farce; for it was a farce, Belford.

* * * *

Up came the aunt. As she hoped for mercy, *she* was not privy to it! For *her* part, she desired no mercy for the wretch; but what was the proof?

She was shown the paper.

"But too evident!" And the vileness of the corrupted and *corruptress* were inveighed against.

Up we all went, passing the lady's door into the dining-room, to proceed to trial.

"Bring up the creature before us, this instant!"

Up was brought Dorcas, whimpering as they pulled her upstairs, "I cannot see his honour; I cannot look so generous a gentleman in the face.

"I have betrayed one trust already! Oh, let me not betray another. My lady is a good lady. Oh, let not *her* suffer!"

"Tell all you know. Tell the whole truth, Dorcas."

* * * *

Just then we heard the lady's door unbar, unlock, unbolt.

"Now, sir!"

"Now, Mr. Lovelace!"

"Now, sir!" from every encouraging mouth.

But, O Jack! Jack! Jack! I can write no more.

* * * *

If you must have it all, you must!

See us all sitting in judgment, resolved to punish the fair briberess—the traitress Dorcas, and Mabel a guard over Dorcas, that she might not run away. All predetermined, from the journey I was going to take, and my precarious situation with her. And hear her *unbolt, unlock, unbar*, the door; then, as it proved afterwards, put the key into the

lock on the outside, lock the door, and put it in her pocket. Will, I knew below, who would give me notice, if she should go downstairs, the street-doors doubly secured, and every shutter to the windows round the house fastened, that no noise or screaming should be heard. And then *hear* her step, and *see* her enter among us, confiding in her innocence, with a majesty that is *natural* to her; but which then shone out in all its glory! Every tongue silent—every eye awed. She silent, looking round her, first on me, then on the mother, as no longer fearing her; then on the culprit Dorcas! Such the glorious power of innocence at that awful moment!

She would have spoken, but could not, looking down my guilt into confusion. A mouse might have been heard passing over the floor: her own light feet and rustling silks could not have prevented it; for she seemed to tread on air, to be all soul. She passed backwards and forwards, now towards me, now towards the door several times, before speech could get the better of indignation; and at last, "O thou contemptible and abandoned Lovelace, thinkest thou that I see not through this poor villainous plot of thine, and of these thy wicked accomplices?"

"Ye vile women, who perhaps have been the ruin, body and soul, of hundreds of innocents (you show me *how*, in full assembly) know that I am not married. Ruined, as I am, by your help, I bless God, I am *not* married to this miscreant; and I have friends that will demand my honour at your hands! And to whose authority I will apply; for none has this man over me. Look to it then, what further insults you offer me. I am a person, though thus vilely betrayed, of rank and fortune. I never will be his; and, to your utter ruin, will find friends to pursue you; and now I have this full proof of your detestable wickedness, will have no mercy upon you."

Lord! how every one, conscience-shaken, trembled!

"And as for thee, thou vile Dorcas!—thou *double* deceiver! whining out thy pretended love for me! Begone, wretch! Nobody will hurt thee! Thou hast too well acted this, thy poor part, in the low farce. Steal away into darkness."

And the wench, confoundedly frightened, slunk away; though I, endeavouring to rally, cried out for Dorcas to stay.

"Madam," said I—and was advancing towards her with a fierce aspect, cursedly vexed.

"Stop where thou art, O vilest and most abandoned of

men!—nor offer to touch me, if thou wouldst not see a corpse at thy feet!”

To my astonishment she held forth a penknife in her hand, the point to her own bosom, grasping resolutely so that there was no offering to take it from her.

“I offer no mischief to anybody but myself. You, sir—and ye women—are safe from every violence of mine. The LAW shall be all my resource—the LAW!” and she spoke the word with emphasis; “The LAW!” that to such people carries natural terror with it, and struck a panic into them.

“The LAW only shall be my refuge!”

The infamous mother whispered me that it were better to *make terms* with this *strange* lady.

Sally, notwithstanding all her impudent bravery at other times, said, “*If* Mr. Lovelace had told *them*, what was *not true* of her being his wife——”

“That is not now a matter to be disputed,” cried I; “you and I know, madam——”

“We do,” said she; “and I thank God I am *not* thine. *Once more*, I thank God for it. I have no doubt of the further baseness that thou hast intended me, by this vile and low trick; but I have my SENSES, Lovelace: from my heart I despise thee, thou very poor Lovelace! How canst thou stand in my presence!”

“Madam, madam, madam—these are insults not to be borne!”—and was approaching her.

She withdrew to the door, and set her back against it, holding the pointed knife to her heaving bosom; while the women held me, beseeching me not to provoke the violent lady, for their *house’s* sake; and all three hung upon me, while the truly heroic lady braved me at that distance.

“Approach me, Lovelace, if thou wilt. I dare die. It is in defence of my honour. God will be merciful to my poor soul! I expect no mercy from thee! Two steps nearer me, and thou shalt see what I dare do!”

“Leave me, women, to myself, and to my angel!” They retired at a distance. “O my beloved creature, how you terrify me!”—holding out my arms. I am the blackest of villains.”

Unawares I had moved to my angel.

“And dost thou still move towards me? Dost thou! dost thou?” And her hand was extended. “I dare—I dare. My heart abhors the act which *thou* makest *necessary*! God, in thy mercy!” Lifting up her eyes and hands. “God, in thy mercy——!”

I threw myself to the farther end of the room. Her cheeks, that were all in a glow before, turned pale, as if terrified at her own purpose; and lifting up her eyes, "Thank God!—thank God!" said the angel, "Delivered *for the present*—from myself! Keep, sir, keep that distance."—Looking towards me, prostrate, my heart pierced as with a hundred daggers. "That distance has saved a life; to what reserved, the Almighty only knows."

Then taking one of the lights, she turned from us, and went away unmolested.

Mabel saw her, tremblingly, take the key of her chamber-door out of her pocket, and unlock it; and, as soon as she entered, heard her double-lock, bar, and bolt it.

By her taking out her key, when she came out of her chamber to us, she no doubt suspected my design; which was to have carried her thither, if she made such force necessary, after I had intimidated her.

* * * *

And now, Belford, I am worse off than before.

Now it is time to set out; all I have gained, detection, disgrace, fresh guilt by repeated perjuries, and to be despised by her I *dote upon*; and, what is worse to a proud heart, by *myself*.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

M. Hall, *Monday, June 26th.*

THOU seest the situation I am in with Miss Harlowe.

Now, Belford, as I think of nothing less than marrying her, I would have thee attend her, and swear for me, bind thy soul to her for me, and use what arguments thy heart can suggest, in order to procure me an answer from her. Then I purpose to leave Lord M., dangerously ill as he is, and meet her at her appointed church.

If she should let the day go off, I shall be desperate. I am entangled in my own devices, and cannot bear that she should detect me.

O that I had been honest! What a devil are all my plots come to! Depending on thy friendly offices, I will say no more of this. Let her send me but *one* line!

My lord is extremely ill. The doctors give him over.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

London, Jun 27th.

You must excuse me, Lovelace, from engaging in the office you would have me undertake, till I can be better assured you really intend honourably at last to this much-injured lady.

I believe you know your friend Belford too well to think he would be easy with you, or with any man alive, who should seek to make him promise for him what he never intended to perform. And let me tell thee, that I have not much confidence in the honour of a man, who, by *imitation of hands* I will only call it, has shown so little regard to the honour of his own relations.

O the divine lady! But I will not aggravate!

If thou canst convince me time enough for the day, that thou meanest to do honourably by her, in *her own* sense of the word, I will most cheerfully undertake thy cause; by *person*, if she will admit me; if she will not, by *pen*. But thou must allow me to be guarantee for thy faith. And, if so, thou mayst depend that I will act up to the character of a guarantee.

Meantime, let me tell thee, my heart bleeds for the wrongs this angelic lady has received; and if thou dost *not* marry her, if she will *have* thee, and, when married, make her the best and tenderest of husbands, I would rather be a dog, a monkey, a bear, a viper, or a toad, than thee.

Command me with honour, and thou shalt find none readier to oblige thee, than

Thy sincere friend,

JOHN BELFORD.

(Mr. Mowbray to Robert Lovelace, Esq.)

Wednesday, 12 o'clock.

DEAR LOVELACE,

I HAVE plaguy news to acquaint thee with. Miss Harlowe is gone off!

If thou shouldst hear that thy fellow Will is taken dead out of some horsepond, and Dorcas cut down from her bed's tester, be not surprised. Here's the devil to pay.

I heartily condole with thee. But it may turn out for the best. They tell me thou wouldst have married her, had she staid. But I know thee better.

Dear Bobby, adieu. If Lord M. will die now, to comfort thee for this loss, what a *seasonable* exit would he make! Let's have a letter from thee.

Thine heartily,

RD. MOWBRAY.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

June 29th.

THOU hast heard the news. Bad or good, I know not which thou wilt deem it. I only wish I could have given thee joy upon the same account, before the unhappy lady was seduced from Hampstead.

I came to town purely to serve thee with her, expecting that thy next would satisfy me that I might endeavour it without dishonour. At first when I found her gone, I half pitied thee; for now wilt thou be inevitably blown up: and in what an execrable light wilt thou appear to all the world!

I suppose thou expectest all particulars from me.

The noble exertion of spirit she had made on Friday night, had, it seems greatly disordered her. She was not visible till Saturday evening, when Mabel saw her; and she seemed to be very ill; but on Sunday morning, having dressed herself, as in designing to go to church, she ordered Mabel to get her a coach.

The wench told her, she was to obey her in everything but calling of a coach or chair, or in relation to letters.

She sent for Will, and gave him the same command.

He pleaded his master's orders, and desired to be excused.

Upon this, down she went herself, and would have gone out without observation; but finding the street-door double-locked, she stepped into the street-parlour, and would have thrown up the sash to call out to the people passing by; but that, since her last attempt of the same nature, had been fastened down.

Hereupon finding herself disappointed, she burst into tears, and went sobbing and menacing upstairs again.

She made no other attempt till the effectual one. Your letters and messages, they suppose, coming so fast upon one another (though she would not answer one of them), gave *her* "some amusement," and an assurance to *them*, that she would at last forgive you; and that all would end as you wished.

Dorcas kept out of her sight. But by the lady's conde-

scension to Mabel, they imagined that she must be working in her mind to get away: they therefore redoubled their caution.

Sally and Dorcas bore their parts in the apprehension; and this put them upon thinking it advisable that the street-door should in the daytime be left upon a latch, which anybody might open inside, and that the key should be kept in the door, that their numerous guests should be able to give evidence *that she might have gone out if she would*; not forgetting, however, to renew their orders to Will, and the rest, to redouble their vigilance; none of them doubting, that her love of a man so considerable in *their* eyes, and the prospect of what was to happen, would engage her to change her temper.

They believe that she discovered the key to be left, for she was down more than once to walk in the little garden, and seemed to cast her eye each time to the street-door.

Yesterday morning, she told Mabel she was sure she should not live long; and having a good many suits of apparel, which after death would be of no use to anybody she valued, she would give her a brown lustring gown, which, with some alterations, to make it suitable to her degree, would serve her for Sunday wear; for that she (Mabel) was the only person in that house of whom she could think without terror or antipathy.

Mabel expressing her gratitude upon the occasion, she said she had nothing to employ herself about; and if she could get a workwoman, she would look over her things, and give her what she intended.

Her mistress's mantua-maker, the maid replied, lived but a little way off; and she doubted not that she could procure *her*, to alter the gown out.

"I will give you also," said she, "a quilted coat, which will require little alteration, for you are about my stature; but the gown I will give directions about, because the sleeves and facings must be altered for your wear. Try," said she, "if you can get the workwoman. If she cannot come now, let her come in the afternoon. It will amuse me."

Then stepping to the window, "It rains," said she; "slip on the hood and cloak I have seen you wear, and come to me when you are ready to go out, because you shall bring me in something that I want."

Mabel equipped herself accordingly, received her commands to buy her some trifles, and left her; but, in her way out, stepped into the back-parlour, where Dorcas was, telling

her where she was going, and bidding Dorcas look out till she came back ; so faithful was the wench to her trust, so little had the lady's generosity wrought upon her.

Mabel soon returned with the mantua-maker's journeywoman ; and Dorcas went off guard.

The lady looked out the gown and petticoat, and caused Mabel to try it on ; and, that it might fit the better, made the willing wench pull off her petticoat and put on that she gave her. Then she bid them go into Mr. Lovelace's apartment, and contrive about it before the pier-glass there, and stay till she came to them.

Mabel would have taken her own clothes with her ; but her lady said, "No matter, you may put them on again here, there's no occasion to litter the other room."

They went ; and instantly, as it is supposed, she slipped on Mabel's gown and petticoat over her own, and put on the wench's cloak and apron, and down she went.

Hearing somebody tripping along the passage, both Will and Dorcas whipped to the inner hall-door, and saw her ; but taking her for Mabel, "Are you going far, Mabel ?" cried Will.

Without turning her face, or answering, she held out her hand, pointing to the stairs, which they construed as a caution for them to look out ; and supposing she would not be long gone, up went Will, tarrying at the stair-head in expectation of the supposed Mabel's return.

Mabel and the workwoman waited, amusing themselves, the one with contriving, the other delighting herself with her fine gown and coat ; but at last, wondering the lady did not come in to them, Mabel went tapping, and not being answered, she stepped into the chamber.

Will, at that instant, from his station, seeing Mabel in her *lady's* clothes, was surprised, having, as he thought, just seen her go out in *her own* ; and stepping up, met her at the door. "How the devil can this be ?" said he ; "just now you went out in your dress ! How came you here in this ? And how could you pass me unseen ?"

"I am glad, Mr. William," cried Mabel, "to see you. Know you where my lady is ?"

"In my master's apartment," answered Will. "Was she not talking with you this moment ?"

"No, that's Mrs. Dolins's journeywoman."

They stood aghast ; Will recollecting he had seen Mabel, as he thought, go out in her own clothes. While they were debating, up comes Dorcas, and seeing Mabel dressed out

(whom she had beheld a little before, as she supposed, in her common clothes), she joined in the wonder, till Mabel suspected what had happened, and then all agreed that she had escaped. Then followed an uproar of mutual accusation.

Will ran out to make inquiry whether the lady was seen by any of the coachmen, chairmen, or porters, in that neighbourhood; while Dorcas cleared herself immediately, at Mabel's expense.

How strong must be her resentment of the barbarous treatment she has received, that has made her *hate* the man she once *loved*, and rather than marry him, to expose her disgrace to the world!

P.S. Mabel's clothes were thrown into the passage this morning; nobody knows by whom.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

June 30th.

I AM ruined, undone, destroyed.

* * * *

One thing I will add. That if thou canst find her out, and prevail upon her to consent, I will in thy presence marry her.

She cannot be long concealed; I have set all engines at work to find her out, and if I do, who will care to embroil themselves with a man of my figure, fortune, and resolution?

Mabel deserves a pitch-suit and a bonfire rather than the lustring. But we must get the dear fugitive back again if possible.

I have another escape to bemoan.

And what dost think it is? Why, the old peer has made shift by fire and brimstone, and the devil knows what, to force the gout out of his stomach.

Thou canst not imagine how differently the servants, and even my cousins, look upon me since yesterday. It is "Cousin Bobby" again, with the usual familiarity, instead of "sir" and "sir," and "if you please, Mr. Lovelace." And they have the insolence to congratulate me on the recovery of the *best of uncles*; while I am forced to seem as much delighted as they, when I could sit down and cry my eyes out. *One misfortune seldom comes alone*: and so concludes *thy doubly mortified*

LOVELACE.

(Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.)

Wednesday night, June 28th.

O MY DEAREST MISS HOWE!

ONCE more have I escaped—but, alas! I, my *best self*, have *not* escaped! Oh! your poor Clarissa Harlowe! *You* also will hate me, I fear! Yet you won't, when you know all.

But no more of myself! my *lost self*. You that can rise in a morning to be blest, and go to bed delighted with your own reflections, you shall be my subject, as you have long, long, been my only pleasure. And let me, at awful distance, revere my beloved Anna Howe, and in her reflect upon what her Clarissa Harlowe once was!

* * * *

O forgive my rambling. My peace is destroyed. My intellects are touched. And what flighty nonsense must you read if you will vouchsafe to correspond with me.

O my best, dearest, *only* friend! Self be banished from *self* to inquire after a *dearer* object, my beloved Anna Howe! Whose mind, all robed in spotless white, charms and irradiates—what would I say?—

* * * *

What is all this incoherence? I only beg to know how you have been, and how you now do, by a line directed for Mrs. Rachel Clark, at Mr. Smith's, a glove-shop in King Street, Covent Garden; which (although my abode is secret to everybody else) will reach the hands of *your unhappy*—but that's not enough—*your miserable*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

(Mrs. Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.)

[Superscribed, as directed in the preceding.]

Friday, June 30th.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE,

You will wonder to receive a letter from me. I am sorry for the great distress you seem to be in; such a hopeful young lady as you were!—But see what comes of disobedience to parents!

For my part, although I pity you, yet I much more pity your poor father and mother. Such education as they gave you! such improvements as you made! and such delight as they took in you! And all come to this!

But pray, miss, don't make my Nancy guilty of disobedience. I have charged her not to correspond with you. *Evil communication*, miss—you know the rest.

Thus my poor daughter is always in tears and grief. And she has postponed her own felicity, truly, because *you* are unhappy.

But you seem to be sensible enough of your errors now. So are all giddy girls when it is too late.

I may say too much; only as I think it proper to bear that testimony against your rashness which every careful parent should bear; and none more than *your compassionate well-wishing*

ANNABELLA HOWE.

I send this by a special messenger who has business only so far as Barnet, because you shall have no need to write again.

(Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Mrs. Howe.)

Saturday, July 1st.

PERMIT me, madam, to trouble you with a few lines, were it only to thank you for your reproofs; which have, nevertheless, drawn fresh streams of blood from a bleeding heart.

My story is a dismal story. It has in it that which would engage pity were its circumstances known. But it shall be *all* my business to repent of my failings and not endeavour to extenuate them.

Nor will I seek to distress your worthy mind, indeed, I took up my pen with this resolution when I wrote the letter which has fallen into your hands. It was only to know if my dear Miss Howe were ill; and if so, how she now does. But my injuries being recent, and my distresses having been exceeding great, *self* would crowd into my letter.

Miss Howe being abroad when my letter came, I flatter myself that she is recovered. But it would be some satisfaction to me to be informed if she *has been ill*. Another line from *your* hand would be too great a favour; but if you will be pleased to direct any servant to answer *yes* or *no* to that question, I will not be further troublesome.

I must declare that my Miss Howe's friendship was all the comfort I had in this world, and a line from her would have been a cordial to my fainting heart. This, however, I ask not for, since I have nothing to do but to beg of God (who, I hope, has not yet withdrawn his grace from me) to

give me a truly broken spirit, and then to take to his mercy
the unhappy

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Two favours, good madam, I have to beg of you. The first, that you will not let any of my relations know that you have heard from me. The other, that no living creature be apprised where I am. This point concerns me more than I can express. In short, my preservation from further evils may depend upon it.

(Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Hannah Burton.)

Thursday, June 29th.

MY GOOD HANNAH,

STRANGE things have happened to me since you were dismissed my service (so sorely against my will), and your pert fellow-servant set over me. But that must be all forgotten now.

How do you, my Hannah? Are you recovered of your illness? If you are, do you choose to come and be with me? Or *can* you conveniently?

I am a very unhappy creature, and being among all strangers, should be glad to have *you*, of whose fidelity and love I have had so many acceptable instances.

Living or dying I will endeavour to make it worth your while, my Hannah.

Don't let any of my friends know of this my desire; whether you can come or not.

I am at Mr. Smith's, a hosier's and glove shop, in King Street, Covent Garden.

You must direct to me by the name of Rachel Clark.

Do, my good Hannah, come if you can to your poor young mistress, who always valued you, and always will.

I send this to your mother at St. Alban's, not knowing where to direct. Return me a line that I may know what to depend on; and I shall see you have not forgotten the pretty hand you were taught, in happy days, by *your true friend*,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

(Hannah Burton, in answer.)

Monday, July 3rd.

HONORED MADAM,

I HAVE not forgot to write, and never will forget anything you, my dear young lady, was so good as to larn me. I am very sorrowful for your misfortens, my dearest young lady ; so sorrowfull, I do not know what to do. Gladd at harte would I be to be able to come to you. But indeed I have not been able to stir out of my rome here at my mother's, ever since I was forced to leave my place with a roomatise, which has made me quite and clene helpless. I will pray for you night and day, my dearest, my kindest, my goodest young lady, who have been so badly used ; and I am very sorry I cannot come to do you love and sarvice ; which will ever be in the harte of mee to do, if it was in my power ; who am *your most dutiful sarvant to command,*

HANNAH BURTON.

(Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Mrs. Judith Norton.)

Thursday, June 29th.

MY DEAR MRS. NORTON,

I ADDRESS myself to you after a very long silence (which, however, was not owing either to want of love or duty), principally to desire you to satisfy me on two or three points which it behoves me to know.

My father, and all the family, I am informed, are to be at my uncle Harlowe's this day, as usual. Pray acquaint me if they *have* been there ? And if they were cheerful on the anniversary.

Strange things have happened to me, my dear maternal friend. Mr. Lovelace has proved a very barbarous and ungrateful man to me. But, God be praised, I have escaped from him. Being among absolute strangers (though I think worthy folks), I have written to Hannah Burton to come and be with me. If the good creature fall in your way, pray encourage her to come to me. I always intended to have her, she knows ; but hoped to be in happier circumstances.

Say nothing to any of my friends that you have heard from me.

Pray, do you think my father would be prevailed upon if I were to supplicate him by letter, to take off the heavy curse he laid upon me at my going from Harlowe Place ? That being literally fulfilled as to my prospects in this life, I hope it

will be thought to have operated far enough. For my father's own sake ; what should I say ? It would give ease to my mind to be released from it.

I am afraid *my poor*, as I used to call the good creatures to whose necessities I was wont to administer by your faithful hands, have missed me of late. But now, alas ! I am poor myself. It is not the least aggravation of my fault, nor of my regrets, that with such inclinations as God has given me, I have put it out of my power to do the good I once thought I was born to do. It is a sad thing, my dearest Mrs. Norton, to render useless to ourselves and the world, by our own rashness, the talents which Providence has entrusted to us.

Let me hope you love me still. Then, notwithstanding misfortunes, I shall have the happiness to think that there is one worthy person who hates not *the unfortunate*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Be pleased to direct, "For Rachel Clark, at Mr. Smith's, in King Street, Covent Garden." But keep the direction an absolute secret.

(Mrs. Norton, in answer.)

Saturday, July 1st.

YOUR letter, my dearest young lady, cuts me to the heart ! Why will you not let me know all your distresses ?

You have been misinformed as to your family's being at your uncle Harlowe's. Indeed, they have not stirred out, but to church, and that but three times, ever since the day you went away. Unhappy day for them, and for all who know you !

I am afraid no letter will be received from you. It grieves me to tell you so. No evil can have happened to you which they do not expect to hear of ; so great is their antipathy to the wicked man, and so bad is his character.

You are escaped. Happily, I hope, with your honour, else how great must be your distress. Yet from your letter I dread the worst.

I am very seldom at Harlowe Place. The house is not the house it used to be, since you went from it.

Your Hannah left her place, ill, some time ago ; and, as she is still at her mother's, at St. Alban's, I am afraid she continues ill. If so, as you are among strangers, I shall think it my duty to attend you, let it be taken as it will.

Your poor bless you, and pray for you. I have so managed your last benevolence, that it has held out, and will hold out, till the happier times return which I continually pray for.

Let me beg of you, my dearest young lady, to take to yourself all those aids which good persons like you draw from religion, in support of their calamities. Let your sufferings be what they will, I am sure you have been innocent in your intention. So do not despond. None are made to suffer above what they *can*, and therefore *ought* to bear.

You know not what God has in store for you.

* * * *

O this wretched man! But I will forbear till I know more.

Your faithful

J. NORTON.

(Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Lady Betty Lawrance.)

Thursday, June 29th.

MADAM,

I HOPE you will excuse the freedom of this address, from one who has not the honour to be personally known to you, although you must have heard of Clarissa Harlowe. It is only to beg the favour of a line from your ladyship's hand, by the next post, if convenient, in answer to the following questions.

Whether you wrote a letter, dated Wednesday, June 7th, congratulating your nephew Lovelace on his supposed nuptials; and whether your ladyship and Miss Montague *did* come to town at that time; and whether you went to Hampstead, on Monday, in a hired coach-and-four, your own being repairing; and took from thence to town the young creature whom you visited there?

Your ladyship will probably guess that the questions are not asked for reasons favourable to your nephew Lovelace. But be the answer what it will, it can do *him* no hurt, nor *me* any good; only that I think I owe it to my former hopes, and even to charity, that a person, of whom I was once willing to think better, should not prove so abandoned, as to be wanting, in *every* instance, in that veracity which is indispensable in the character of a gentleman.

Be pleased, madam, to direct in me (keeping the direction a secret for the present), "To be left at the Bell Savage, on Ludgate Hill, till called for." I am your ladyship's most humble servant,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

(Lady Betty Lawrance to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.)

Saturday, July 1st.

DEAR MADAM,

I FIND that all is not as it should be between you and my nephew Lovelace. It will afflict me, and all his friends, if he has been guilty of any baseness to a lady of your character and merit.

We have been long in expectation of an opportunity to congratulate you and ourselves upon an event earnestly wished for by all, since our hopes of *him* are built upon the power *you* have over him; for if ever man adored a woman, he is that man, and you that woman.

I will now answer your questions, but hardly know what to write, for fear of widening still more the unhappy difference between you. But yet such a young lady must command everything from me. I wrote not any letter to him on or about the 7th of June.

Nor have I been in town these six months; nor at Hampstead for several years.

Neither shall I have any temptation to go to town, except to pay my congratulatory compliments to Mrs. Lovelace, on which occasion I should go with the greatest pleasure, and should hope for the favour of your accompanying me to Glenham Hall for a month at least.

And here let me offer you my mediation to compose the difference between you, be it what it will. Your cause, my dear young lady, cannot be put into the hands of anybody more devoted to your service, than your sincere admirer, and humble servant,

ELIZ. LAWRENCE.

(Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Lady Betty Lawrance.)

Monday, July 3rd.

MADAM,

I CANNOT excuse myself from giving your ladyship this one trouble more; to thank you, as I most heartily do, for your kind letter.

When your ladyship shall be informed that after he had tricked me into the act of going off with him, he could carry me to one of the vilest houses,—that after he had found me out at Hampstead, he could procure two women, dressed to personate your ladyship and Miss Montague, who, under pretence of engaging me to make a visit in

town to your cousin Leeson, betrayed me back to the house, where, again a prisoner, I was first robbed of my senses, and then of my honour——

When your ladyship shall know that, in the progress to this ruin, falsehoods, forgeries (particularly of one letter from your ladyship, another from Miss Montague), were not the least of his crimes, you will judge that I can have no principles that will make me worthy of an alliance with ladies of your character, if I could not from my soul declare that such an alliance can never *now* take place.

I will not offer to clear myself of blame for putting myself in the power of his arts. I am content to be punished; thankful that I have escaped from him.

All the ill I wish him is, that I may be the last victim.

I conclude with my humble thanks to your ladyship for your favourable opinion of me.

I am your ladyship's grateful and obliged servant,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

(Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.)

[*Superscribed for Mrs. Rachel Clark, &c.*]

Wednesday, July 5th.

MY DEAR CLARISSA,

I HAVE at last heard from you from a quarter I little expected.

From my mother.

She had for some time seen me uneasy and grieving, and justly supposed it was about you. I this morning dropped a hint, which made me conjecture that she must have heard something of you. When she found that this added to my uneasiness, she owned she had a letter in her hands of yours, dated the 29th of June, directed for me.

You may guess that this occasioned a little warmth that could not be wished for by either. And at last she was pleased to compromise the matter with me by giving up the letter, and permitting me to write to you *once* or *twice*; she to see the contents of what I wrote. For, besides the value she has for you, she could not but have a great curiosity to know the occasion of so sad a situation as your melancholy letter shows you to be in.

But I shall get her to be satisfied with hearing me read what I write, putting in between hooks, thus [] what I intend not to read to her.

Let me tell you that that letter has almost broken my

heart. Good God! what have you brought yourself to, Clarissa? Could I have believed that after you had escaped from the miscreant with such mighty pains, and after such an attempt as he had made, you would have been prevailed upon not only to forgive him, but, without being married too, to return with him. Surprising! What an intoxicating thing is *this love*.

You your *best self* have not escaped. Indeed, I see not how you could expect to escape.

What a tale have you to unfold! You need not unfold it, my dear.

Your peace is destroyed! I wonder not at it, since now you must reproach yourself for a credulity so ill placed.

Your intellect is touched! I am sure my heart bleeds for you; but excuse me, my dear, I doubt your intellect was touched before you left Hampstead, or you would never have let him find you out there; or, when he did, suffer him to prevail upon you to return with him.

[Miss Howe here speaks of the letters she had sent Clarissa which Lovelace had intercepted.—ED.]

My mother tells me she sent you an answer, desiring you not to write to me, because it would grieve me. To be sure, I *am* grieved, and *disappointed*.

Your afflicted and faithful

A. H.

My mother has excused our correspondence.

You may therefore write freely, and direct to our own house.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Thursday, July 6th.

You have till now, my dear, treated me with great indulgence. I find by the rising bitterness which will mingle with the gall in my ink, that I am not yet subdued enough to my condition. I lay down my pen for one moment.

* * * *

I will now, as *briefly* as the subject will permit, enter into the darker part of my sad story.

A little pause, my dear, at this place. Your ever affectionate and obliged

C. H.

(Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.)

[*Referred to in preceding page.*]

Thursday night.

He had found me out at Hampstead. I am at a loss to know by what means.

Mr. Lovelace, finding all he could say ineffectual to prevail upon me to forgive him, rested his hopes on a visit to be paid me by Lady Betty Lawrance and Miss Montague.

With my prospects all so dark, I knew not to whom I might be obliged to have recourse, and as those ladies had the best of characters, I thought I would not *shun* an interview with them though I would not seek it.

On the 12th of June these pretended ladies came to Hampstead, and I was presented to them by their kinsman.

They were richly dressed, and came in a coach-and-four, hired while their own was repairing in town, a pretence, I find, lest I should guess at the imposture by the want of the real lady's arms upon it.

I had heard that Lady Betty was a fine woman, and Miss Montague beautiful and full of vivacity. Such were these impostors. I had not the least suspicion that they were not the ladies they personated.

I am ashamed to repeat to you, my dear, now I know what wretches they are, the tender, obliging things I said to them.

They engaged me in agreeable conversation, declaring that they would directly interest themselves to bring about a reconciliation between the two families.

Could I help, my dear, being pleased with them?

* * * *

(*Clarissa in continuation.*)

I was obliged to lay down my pen. Better now; so will proceed.

The pretended ladies, the more we talked the fonder they seemed to be of me.

The grand deluder was at the farther end of the room, out of the way, probably to give me an opportunity to hear these preconcerted praises.

Never were there more cunning, artful impostors, than

these women, yet genteel, and they must have been well educated. Once, perhaps, the delight of their parents.

* * * *

But the *man*! Never so consummate a deceiver.

They talked again of reconciliation and intimacy with every one of my friends, with my mother particularly, and gave the dear good lady the praises that every one gives her, who has the happiness to know her.

Ah, my dear Miss Howe, I almost forgot my resentments against the pretended nephew. "But amidst these delightful prospects, I must not," said *the* Lady Betty, "forget that I am to go to town."

She then ordered her coach to be got to the door.

"We will all go to town together," said she, "and return together. It will be a little airing for you, my dear."

I had no intention to comply and made no answer.

* * * *

In the midst of agreeablenesses, the coach came to the door. Lady Betty besought me to give them my company. I desired to be excused, yet suspected nothing.

I objected to my dress.

Mr. Lovelace, wicked deceiver, seeing, as he said, my dislike to go, desired her ladyship not to insist upon it.

She begged me to oblige her; in short, was so very urgent, that my feet complied, and being, in a manner, led to the coach by her, and made to step in first, she followed with her pretended niece and the wretch, and away it drove.

Nothing but the height of affectionate complaisance passed all the way, over and over.

Though not pleased, I was then thoughtless of danger; but think, my dear, what a dreadful turn all had upon me, when, through several streets I knew nothing of, the coach came within sight of the dreadful house.

"Lord be good unto me!" cried the poor fool, looking out of the coach. "Mr. Lovelace, Madam," turning to the pretended Lady Betty. "Madam," turning to the niece, my hands and eyes lifted up.

"What, what, my dear?"

He pulled the string.

"What need to have come this way?" said he; "but since we are, I will but ask a question."

The coachman stopped, *his* servant alighted. "Ask," said he, "if I have any letters?"

My heart then misgave me; I was ready to faint.

"Why this terror, my life? You shall not stir out of the coach. But one question, now the fellow has drove us this way."

"Your lady will faint," cried the execrable Lady Betty, turning to him. "My dearest niece, we must alight. Only for water and hartshorn."

"No, no, no; I am quite well. Won't the man drive on? *Man*, drive on," putting my head out of the coach, though my voice was too low to be heard.

The coach stopped at the door. How I trembled!

Dorcas came.

"My dearest creature," said the vile man, gasping, as it were for breath, "you shall *not* alight. Any letters for me, Dorcas?"

"There are two, sir. Mr. Belton is waiting for you."

"I'll just speak to him. You shan't step out, my dear."

I sighed, as if my heart would burst.

"But we *must* step out, nephew. You will faint, child; you must step out, my dear."

"Madam," said the vile seducer, "my dearest love must not be moved in this point against her will."

* * * *

He stepped out.

"The coach may go on, madam," said I.

"The coach *shall* go on, my dear life," said he. But he gave no orders that it should.

The old creature came to the door. "A thousand pardons, dear madam," stepping to the coach side. "Be pleased, ladies to alight."

I still refused to go out. "Man! man!" cried I, gasping, "drive on!"

My heart misgave me; still I did not suspect these women. The sight of the old creature made me like a distracted person.

The hartshorn and water was brought. The pretended Lady Betty made me drink it. Heaven knows if there were anything else in it!

"Besides," said she, whisperingly, "I must see what sort of creatures the *nieces* are. You could not, my dear, have this aversion to re-enter a house, in our company, in which you lodged and boarded several weeks, unless these women

could be so presumptuously vile, as my nephew ought not to know."

Out stepped the pretended lady; the servant having opened the door.

A crowd by this time was gathered about us: but I was too much affected to mind that.

The pretended Miss Montague urged me to go. "Lord, my dear," said she, "who can bear this crowd? What will people think?"

And thus pressed and gazed at, the women so richly dressed, people whispering, in an evil moment out stepped I, trembling, forced to lean on the pretended Lady Betty's arm. O that I had dropped down dead!

"We shall stay but a few minutes, my dear!" said the specious jilt.

"Come, Mrs. Sinclair, I think your name is, show us the way——" leading me. "I am very thirsty. I must have tea, if it can be got in a moment. We must return to Hampstead this night."

"It shall be ready in a moment," cried the wretch.

"Come, my dear, to me. Lean upon me—how you tremble! Dearest niece, Lovelace" (the old wretch being in hearing), "we'll be gone in a minute."

And thus she led the poor sacrifice into the too-well known parlour.

The tea was ready presently.

There was no Mr. Belton, I believe; for the wretch went not to anybody, unless it were while we were parleying in the coach.

I was made to drink two dishes, urged by the pretended ladies. I was stupid to their hands, and could hardly swallow.

I thought that the tea had an odd taste.

I have no doubt that my two dishes were prepared for me.

Nevertheless, at the pretended ladies' motion, I went upstairs, attended by Dorcas, and set about taking out some of my clothes, ordering what should be sent after me.

While I was thus employed, up came the pretended Lady Betty, in a hurrying way—"My dear, you won't be long before you are ready. My nephew is answering his letters; I'll just whip away, and change my dress, and call upon you in an instant."

"O, madam! I am *now* ready!—You must not leave me here." And down I sunk, affrighted, into a chair.

"This instant I will return."

And away she hurried before I could speak. Her pretended niece went with her.

Recovering my stupefied spirits as well as I could, I wondered to Dorcas what ailed me; rubbing my eyes, and taking some of her snuff, to little purpose, I pursued my employment; but, when that was over, I had nothing to do but to *think*. I shut myself into the chamber that had been mine; I prayed, yet knew not what I prayed for; then ran out again; it was almost dark, I said. Where, where was Mr. Lovelace?

He came to me, taking no notice at first of my consternation and wildness (what they had given me made me incoherent and wild).

I *demand*ed his aunt!—I *demand*ed his cousin! The evening was closing! My head was very, *very* bad; and it grew worse and worse.

But terror kept up my spirits; and I insisted upon his going to hasten them.

He raved at the *sex* for *their* delay.

He terrified me with his looks as he gazed upon me. He snatched my hand with vehemence: speaking tender words; his manner carrying the appearance of convulsed passion! O, my dear! what mischiefs was he not then meditating!

I complained of thirst and called for water; some table-beer was brought me; being extremely thirsty, I drank it, and instantly found myself much worse than before.

Then came one of the pretended Lady Betty's servants, with a letter for Mr. Lovelace.

He sent it up to me. I read it; and then it was I thought myself lost; it being to put off her going to Hampstead that night, on account of fits which Miss Montague was seized with. Then immediately came into my head his vile attempts in this house; and the revenge my flight might have inspired. His very looks were dreadful to me. All crowding together in my mind, I fell into a kind of frenzy.

I have no remembrance for the time it lasted; but I know that in my first agitations, I pulled off my head-dress, and tore my ruffles in twenty tatters, and ran to find him out.

When a little recovered, I insisted upon the hint he had given of their coach. But he said that it was sent to fetch a physician.

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All impatient with grief and apprehension, I declared myself resolved not to stay in that house till morning. All I

had in the world, my rings, my watch, my little money, for a coach; or, if one were not to be got, I would go on foot to Hampstead that night, though I walked by myself.

A coach was hereupon pretended to be sent for. None was to be got.

Let me cut short the rest. I grew worse and worse in my head: now stupid, now raving, now senseless.

Fits upon fits, imperfectly remembered. But death was withheld from me. That would have been too great a mercy!

* * * *

Thus was I tricked and deluded. I will say no more on a subject so shocking to my remembrance.

I never saw the personating wretches afterwards.

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

Sunday, July 9th.

MAY heaven signalize its vengeance, in the face of all the world, upon the most abandoned and profligate of men, and in its own time I doubt not but it will. And we must look to a world beyond for the reward of your sufferings.

My mother has commanded me to let you know her thoughts upon your sad story.

Meantime I beseech you to believe me your unalterable friend,

A. H.

(Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.)

M. Hall, *Friday, July 7th.*

JACK, what heart thinkest thou can I have to write, when I have lost the only subject worth writing upon?

Help me again to my angel, to my Clarissa.

O, my beloved Clarissa, return once more to bless thy Lovelace!

* * * *

Jack, it is a surprising thing to me that the dear fugitive cannot be heard of. Had I been at liberty I should have found her out before now.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

M. Hall, *Sunday night, July 9th.*

Now, Jack, have I a subject with a vengeance. I am in the very height of my trial for all my sins to my beloved. Here to-day arrived Lady Sarah Sadlier and Lady Betty Lawrance, each in her chariot-and-six.

With horrible grave faces was I received. The two antiques, making long faces, "How do you, cousin?" and "How do you, Mr. Lovelace?" looking at one another, as who should say "Do you speak first," and "Do you."

I had nothing for it but an air as manly as theirs was womanly. "Your servant, Madam," and "Your servant, Madam, I am glad to see you abroad," to Lady Sarah.

I took my seat. Lord M. looked horribly glum.

At last, "Mr. Lovelace——cousin Lovelace——hem, hem——I am very sorry," hesitated Lady Sarah.

"What's the matter now, Madam?"

"The matter! Why, Lady Betty has two letters from Miss Harlowe, which have told us what's the matter."

Then they were all upon me. "What can you expect will be the end?" cried Lady Sarah. "Damn'd doings," vociferated the peer.

For my part, I hardly knew what to reply. "Fair and softly, ladies. Pray let me see these letters."

"There they are."

I opened a letter from my charmer to Lady Betty. By the contents, to my great joy, I find the dear creature is alive and well. But the direction where to send an answer was scratched out.

"Give me the letter," said the peer.

"There it is, my lord."

* * * *

Then again they chorused upon me.

A blessed time of it, poor I! I had nothing for it but impudence.

* * * *

(Miss Howe to Miss Charlotte Montague.)

Tuesday morning, July 18th.

MADAM,

I TAKE the liberty to write to you by a special messenger. In the frenzy of my soul I write to you to demand of you, and of your family who can tell, news of my beloved friend, who, I doubt, has been spirited away by the base arts of one of the blackest——help me to a name bad enough to call him by. It must be he, the only wretch who could injure such an innocent.

I wrote to her on Sunday night by a particular hand,

chiding her for keeping a heart so impatient as mine in such cruel suspense upon a matter of so much importance.

Judge my astonishment, my distraction, when last night the messenger brought word that she had not been heard of since Friday morning, and that a letter lay for her at her lodgings, which must be mine.

She went out about six that morning, only intending to go to prayers at Covent Garden church, just by, as she had done divers times before, and left word she should be back in an hour—very poorly in health.

O, Madam, you know not how I love her. She was the joy of my life. Who knows whether the dear injured has not all her woes completed in death? This I leave to your inquiry, for your—shall I call the man your relation?—I understand is still with you. I make no apology for giving you this trouble, or for desiring you to favour with a line by this messenger your distracted

ANNA HOWE.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

M. Hall, *Saturday night, June 15th.*

ALL undone, by Jupiter! Zounds, Jack, what shall I do now? A curse upon all my plots and contrivances.

Thy assistance I bespeak. This messenger rides for life and death.

This cursed woman, Sinclair, on Friday dispatched man and horse with the news that she had found out my angel on Friday morning, after she had been at Covent Garden church, had got her arrested by two sheriffs' officers as she was returning to her lodgings, put into a chair they had, and carried to one of the cursed fellow's houses.

She has arrested her for £150, pretendedly due for board and lodging.

And here has the dear creature lain two days.

Hasten, dear Jack, to the injured charmer. She deserved not this.

This accursed woman thinks she has made no small merit with me.

Set her free the moment you see her. On your knees, for me, beg her pardon. Only let her permit you to receive her commands.

Let her have all her clothes and effects instantly, as a small proof of my sincerity, and force upon the dear creature what sums you can get her to take.

A line ! A line ! A kingdom for a line, with tolerable news the first moment thou canst write. This fellow waits to bring it.

(Miss Charlotte Montague to Miss Howe.)

M. Hall, *Tuesday afternoon.*

DEAR MISS HOWE,

YOUR letter has infinitely disturbed us all.

This wretched man has been distracted ever since Saturday night.

We knew not what ailed him till your letter was brought. Vile wretch as he is, he is however innocent of this new evil.

I will not detain your messenger, except to satisfy you by telling you that the dear young lady is safe, and, we hope, well.

A horrid mistake of his general orders has subjected her to the terror and disgrace of an arrest.

Poor dear Miss Harlowe, her sufferings have endeared her to us.

She must be now quite at liberty.

He has been distracted ever since the news was brought him, and we knew not what ailed him.

I am, dear madam, your most faithful and obedient servant,

CH. MONTAGUE.

(Miss C. Montague, *in continuation.*)

MR. LOVELACE owned the matter to be :

He had left directions to the people of the lodgings the dear lady went from, to find out where she was gone, that he might importune her to be his before their difference was public. The wicked people discovered her on Wednesday, and, for fear she should remove, they put her under *gentle restraint*, as they call it, and despatched a messenger to acquaint him with it.

When he had read the letter he brought, what a fury he was in.

He despatched a letter to his friend Mr. Belford, to conjure him to fly to the lady and set her free, and clear him of so *villainous* a fact.

By this time he doubts not that all is happily over.

He forbore going himself, that it might not be imagined he was guilty of so black a contrivance.

Believe us all, dear Miss Howe, deeply concerned at this unhappy accident, which will, we fear, exasperate the charming sufferer.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Sunday night, July 16th.

WHAT a cursed piece of work hast thou made of it!

Your messenger found me at Edgeware. I speeded to the wicked woman's, and finding the lady not there, I posted away to the officers, although Sally told me that she had just come from thence, and that she had refused to see her or anybody, being resolved to have the remainder of that Sunday to herself, as it might, perhaps, be the last she should ever see.

I had the same thing told me when I got thither.

I sent up to let her know that I came to set her at liberty. I was afraid of sending up the name of a man known to be your friend. She would not see *any man*, however, for that day.

Having therefore informed myself of all that the officer could acquaint me with, I went back to Sinclair's and heard the three women's story.

Your villain it was that *set* the poor lady, and had the impudence to abet the sheriff's officers in the cursed transaction. He thought, no doubt, that he was doing acceptable service. They had got a chair as soon as service was over, and as she came out of church, the officers, stepping to her, whispered that they had an action against her.

She was terrified, trembled, and turned pale.

Action!" said she. "What is that? I have committed *no bad action!* What mean you?"

"That you are our prisoner, madam."

"*Prisoner*, sirs! Why, what have I done?"

"You must go with us. Be pleased, madam, to step into this chair."

"With *you!* with *men!* Indeed you must excuse me!"

"We can't excuse you, we are sheriff's officers. We have a writ against you. You *must* go with us, and you shall know at whose suit."

"*Suit*," said the charming innocent; "I don't know what you mean. Pray, men, don't lay hands upon me."

She then spied thy villain. "Oh, thou wretch!" said she, "where is thy vile master?"

"My master is in the country, madam. If you please to go with these men they will treat you civilly."

The people about were struck with compassion. "A fine young creature!" "a thousand pities!" cried some.

"Can nobody," joined in a gentleman, "be applied to, who will see that so fine a creature is not ill-used?"

Thy villain answered, Orders were given particularly for that. She had rich relations. She would only be carried to the officer's house, till matters could be made up. The people she had lodged with loved her, but she had left her lodgings privately.

She said—"Well, I cannot resist, but I will not be carried to the woman's. I will rather die at your feet."

"You won't be carried there, madam," cried thy fellow.

"Only to my house, madam," said one of the officers, "to High Holborn."

"I know not where that is; but anywhere except to the woman's."

And stepping into the chair, she threw herself on the seat, in distress and confusion. "Carry me—carry me out of sight. Cover me—cover me up—for ever," were her words.

Thy villain drew the curtain, and they went away with her through a vast crowd of people. I can write no more.

* * * *

The unhappy lady fainted away when she was taken out of the chair at the officer's house.

[After giving an account of the visits of Dorcas and her compeers to poor Clarissa, in which they worry her with their officiousness, Mr. Belford proceeds]:—

At twelve on Saturday night, Rowland, the officer, sent to tell them at Sinclair's that she was so ill, that he knew not what might be the issue, and wished her out of his house.

They sent for the apothecary Rowland had had to her, and gave strict orders for the utmost care to be taken of her; no doubt with an Old Bailey forecast.

When I told them of thy execrations for what they had done, they said they had thought they had known Mr. Lovelace better, and expected thanks, not curses.

* * * *

J. BELFORD.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Monday, July 17th.

AT six this morning I went to Rowland's. Mrs. Sinclair was to follow me, in order to dismiss the action, but not to come in sight.

Rowland—that was the name of the officer—told me that the lady was extremely ill, and that she had desired that no one but his wife or maid should come near her.

I said, “I *must* see her.”

His wife went up, but returned, saying, she could not get her to speak, yet her eyelids moved.

“Woman,” said I, “the lady may be in a fit—may be dying. Show me the way up.”

A horrid hole of a house, in a court. Into a den they led me, with broken walls. A bed at one corner, with coarse curtains tacked up to the ceiling: a coverlid on it in tatters. The windows dark and barred. Four old chairs. An old, worm-eaten table, and on the mantelpiece an iron candlestick, with a lighted candle in it: twinkle, twinkle, twinkle! On a shelf was an old looking-glass, cracked. The chimney had two half-tiles in it.

And this, thou horrid Lovelace, was the bed-chamber of the divine Clarissa!!!

She was kneeling in a corner near the dismal window, her back to the door, her arms crossed on a table, her right hand on her Bible.

* * * *

Her dress was white damask, exceeding neat; her tangled hair shading one side of her neck; her face, O how altered! yet lovely in grief.

When I saw the lady, sunk with majesty, in her white flowing robes (for she had not on a hoop), something rose in my throat; “Confound you both,” said I to the man and woman, “is this an apartment for such a *lady*?”

“Sir, we would have had the lady accept of our own bed-chamber, but she refused it. We are poor people, and we expect nobody will stay with us longer than they can help it.”

Up raised the sufferer her lovely face, with such a significance of woe overspreading it, that I could not for the soul of me help being visibly affected.

She waved her hand as if displeased at my intrusion.

“I dare not approach you, dearest lady,” I said, “without your leave; but I beseech you to permit me to release you

from this house, and from the power of the accursed woman who was the occasion of your being here."

"Are you not—are you not Mr. Belford, sir? I think your name is Belford."

"It is, madam; I was ever an advocate for you; and I come to release you from the hands you are in."

"This moment, dearest lady, if you please you may depart. You are free, your own mistress."

"I had as lieve die here as anywhere, so pray, sir, withdraw. If you mean me well, God, I hope, will reward you; but to the friend of my *destroyer* will I not owe an obligation."

* * * *

"Sir, I am very ill. I would fain get a little rest, if I could."

And offering to rise, she sunk down through weakness and grief, in a fainting fit.

They recovered her by hartshorn and water. I went down meanwhile.

I sent up again when I heard that she was recovered, beseeching her to quit the place; the woman assured her that she was at liberty to do so, for that the action was dismissed.

But she cared not to answer.

Being told that she seemed inclined to doze, I went to her lodgings in Covent Garden. Honest people they are, it seems. The name Smith, dealers in gloves and petty merchandise. I told the man what had befallen the lady, and desired him to send his wife to her as soon as she came in, which he promised.

(*In continuation.*)

Monday night, July 17th.

ON my return to Rowland's, I found that the apothecary was just gone up. Mrs. Rowland being above, I made no scruple to go up.

The lady was sitting on the side of the broken couch, and, I observed, cared not to speak to the man; and no wonder, for I never saw a more shocking fellow, nor heard more illiterate prate.

The lady looked displeased at us. It was not, she said, the least of her present misfortunes, that she could not be left to her own sex, and to see whom she pleased.

I besought her excuse, and winking for the apothecary to withdraw, told her that I had been at her new lodgings, to

order everything to be got ready for her reception, presuming she would choose to go thither; that I had a chair at the door; that Mr. Smith and his wife (I named their names that she should not have room for the least fear of Sinclair's) had been full of apprehensions for her safety; that I had brought two letters which were left there for her, the one by the post, the other that very morning.

This took her attention. She held out her charming hand for them, took them, and pressing them to her lips—"From the only friend I have in the world!" said she, kissing them again, and looking at the seals, as if to see whether they had been opened. "I can't read them," said she, "my eyes are too dim;" and put them into her bosom.

I besought her to think of quitting that wretched hole.

Whither could she go, she asked, to be safe and uninterrupted, and to avoid being again visited by the creatures who had insulted her before?

I gave her the solemnest assurances that she should not be invaded in her new lodgings by anybody.

I assured her, in the strongest terms, that you were resolved not to molest her; and, as a proof of the sincerity of my professions, besought her to give me directions (in pursuance of my friend's express desire) about sending whatever belonged to her, to her new lodgings.

She seemed pleased, and gave me instantly out of her pocket her keys, asking me if Mrs. Smith, whom I had named, might not attend me, and she would give her further directions? To which I cheerfully assented, and then she told me that she would accept the chair I had offered her.

After I had gone, she attempted to read the letters I had brought; but she could read but little, and with great emotion.

She told Rowlands she would take a speedy opportunity to acknowledge their civilities, and that the apothecary might send his bill to her lodgings.

She gave the maid something; probably the only half-guinea she had; then with difficulty, supported by Mrs. Rowland, got downstairs.

"I doubt, sir," said she to me on my return, "I have behaved rudely; but if you knew all, you would forgive me."

"I know enough, madam," said I, "to convince me you have been most barbarously treated."

I ordered my servant to keep the chair in view, and to bring me word how she did when set down.

He was able to tell me she was received with great joy by the

good woman of the house. "Oh, Mrs. Smith," said she, as soon as she saw her, "did you not think I was run away? You don't know what I have suffered since I saw you. I have been in a prison! Arrested for debts I owe not. But, thank God, I am here. Will you permit your maid Catherine to assist me to bed? I have not had my clothes off since Thursday night."

So, leaning upon the maid, she went upstairs.

Thine, J. B.

(Belford, *in continuation.*)

July 18th.

I RENEWED my inquiries this morning. She returned thanks, and said she hoped to drink a dish with me at six o'clock.

* * * *

She has handsome apartments, a diligent, honest nurse, and the voluntary attendance of a widow, Mrs. Lovick, who lodges over her, of whom she is very fond.

At seven this morning she was so ill that she yielded to their desires to have an apothecary sent for, one Mr. Goddard, a man of eminence.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Tuesday night, July 18th.

I AM just come from the lady. I was admitted into the dining-room, where she was sitting in an elbow-chair, very weak and low. She made an effort to stand up when I entered; but was forced to keep her seat.

"You'll excuse me, Mr. Belford; I ought to rise to thank you for all your kindness to me. I was to blame to be so loth to leave that sad place; for I am in heaven here to what I was there; and good people about me, too! I have not had good people about me for a long, long time before, so that (with a half-smile) I had begun to wonder whither they were all gone."

Her nurse and Mrs. Smith, who were present, retired, and when we were alone,—“You seem to be a person of humanity, sir,” said she. “You hinted, as I was leaving *my prison*, that you were not a stranger to my sad story. If you knew it *truly*, you must know that I have been most barbarously treated, and have not deserved it at the man's hands by whom I have suffered.”

I then mentioned your grief, your penitence, your resolutions of making her all the amends that were possible now to be

made her, and in the most earnest manner I asserted your innocence as to the last villainous outrage. "It is painful," she said, "to think of him. The amends you talk of cannot be made. Yet, his vile forgeries; his baseness in imposing upon me the most infamous persons as ladies of honour of his own family, his plots and contrivances, and the exultings of the wicked wretches on finding me out, all show me that all his guilt was premeditated; nor doubt I that his inhuman arts, as he went along, were to pass for fine stratagems, for witty sport. O my cruel, cruel brother! had it not been for thee, I had not been thrown upon so pernicious and so despicable a plotter."

* * * *

"O the wicked man! what has he not vowed? What has he not invented? And for what?—to ruin a poor young creature whom he had first deprived of all protection."

She arose and turned from me, her handkerchief at her eyes; and, after a pause, came towards me—"I hope," said she, "I talk to a man who has a better heart; and I thank you, sir, for all your kindness. But enough, and too much of this subject, sir. If he will never more let me behold his face, that is all I have to ask of him. Indeed, indeed," clasping her hands, "*I never will* if I can avoid it."

What could I say for thee?

Methinks I have a kind of holy love for this angel of a woman; and it is matter of astonishment to me that thou couldst converse with her a quarter of an hour together, and hold thy devilish purposes.

J. B.

* * * *

(Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.)

Wednesday, July 19th.

THIS morning I took chair to Smith's; and, being told that the lady had had a very bad night, but was up, I sent for her apothecary, who approved of my proposal of calling in Dr. H. I bid the woman acquaint her with the designed visit.

It seems she was at first displeased, yet withdrew her objection. After a pause, asked them what she should do? She had effects of value, some of which she intended, as soon as she *could*, to turn into money; but till then had not a single guinea to give the doctor for his fee.

Mrs. Lovick said she had five guineas by her; they were at her service.

She would accept of three, she said, if she would take *that* (pulling a diamond-ring from her finger) till she paid her; but on no other terms.

She desired to speak to me before she saw the doctor.

She was sitting in an elbow-chair, leaning her head on a pillow, Mrs. Smith and the widow and nurse with her.

"I have but one condition to make," she said, "before I see the doctor. I mean that he refuse not his fee. If I am poor, I am proud."

Seeing her determined, I said it must be so.

When the doctor paid his respects, I would have retired, but she forbid it.

He took her hand, the lily not so white. "Indeed, madam, you are very low," said he; "but give me leave to say, that you can do more for yourself than all the faculty can do for you."

He then withdrew to the window. And after a short conference with the women, turned to me. He said, "We can do nothing for her," he said, speaking low, "but by cordials and nourishment. What friends has the lady? She seems to be a person of condition; and, ill as she is, a very fine woman. A single lady, I presume?"

I whisperingly told him she was. That there were extraordinary circumstances in her case; that her friends were very cruel to her; but that she could not hear them named without reproaching herself, though they were much more to blame than she.

"I knew I was right," said the doctor. "A love-case, Mr. Goddard! A love-case, Mr. Belford! There is one person in the world who can do her more service than all the faculty."

The doctor wrote. He would fain have declined his fee.

She said she should be always glad to see so humane a man.

She should always have pleasure in considering him in the kind light he *offered himself to her*; that she was not at present high in circumstances as he saw by the tender which he *must* accept of.

We all withdrew together.

Three o'clock.

Mrs. Smith told me, that, after we were gone, she gave her keys to the widow Lovick, and desired them to take an

inventory of them, which they did ; and she requested them to find her a purchaser for two rich dressed suits.

This shocked me exceedingly.

They were much concerned and asked my advice.

* * * *

They wanted to know her story.

I told them, that she was indeed a woman of family and fortune ; I still gave them room to suppose her married ; but left it to her to tell them all in her own time and manner ; all I would say was, that she had been very vilely treated, deserved it not ; and was all innocence and purity.

As to disposing of the two suits of apparel, I told Mrs. Smith that she should pretend that, upon inquiry, she had found a friend who would purchase the richest of them, and having twenty guineas about me, I left them with her, in part of payment, and bid her *pretend* to get her to part with it for as little more as she could induce her to take.

I am setting out for Edgeware. Adieu.

●

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

Thursday morning, July 20th.

WHAT, my dearest creature, have been your sufferings !—What must have been your anguish on so disgraceful an insult, committed in the open streets, in the broad day !

You must be ill. But I hope it is from hurry, and lowness, which *may* be overcome.

But, my dear, you must not despond ! Hitherto you have been in no fault. Despair would be the worst fault you can be guilty of.

We expect your answer to my letter of the 13th with impatience.

* * * *

I think, with my mother, that marriage is now the only means left to make your future life tolerably easy—*happy* there is no saying. His disgraces, in the eye of the world itself, will be more than yours ; and to those who know you, glorious will be your triumph.

I am obliged to accompany my mother soon to the Isle of Wight. My aunt Harman is in a declining way, and insists upon seeing us and Mr. Hickman.

It would be death to me to set out for the little island, and not see you first ; and yet my mother insists that my next visit to you *must* be a congratulatory one, as Mrs. Lovelace.

Your ever affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Thursday afternoon.

You pain me, my dearest Miss Howe, by the ardour of your friendship. I will be brief, for I am not well. But, beforehand, I must tell you, my dear, I will *not* have that man.

I am no prisoner now in a vile house. I am not now obliged to hide myself for fear of him. One of his intimate companions is become my warm friend, and engages to keep him from me. I am among honest people. I have all my clothes and effects restored to me. The wretch himself bears testimony to my honour.

I am very ill; but I have an excellent physician.

I shall have sinkings sometimes. I must expect such.

. And my father's maledict! But you will chide me.

Think not of me, my only friend, but as we were in times past; and suppose me gone a great, great way off!—a long journey!

Love me still. I am not what I was, when we were *inseparable* lovers. Resolve, my dear, to make a worthy man happy. And so, my dearest love, adieu!

C. H.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Thursday night.

I was forced to take back my twenty guineas. How the women managed it, I can't tell (I suppose they too readily found a purchaser for the rich suit); but she mistrusted that I was the advancer of the money, and would not let the clothes go. But Mrs. Lovick has sold, for fifteen guineas, some lace worth three times the sum; out of which she repaid her the money she borrowed for fees to the doctor.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Friday noon, July 21st.

THIS morning I was admitted as soon as I sent up my name.

She had had a tolerable night, and was better in spirits, though visibly declining.

She said she had rested better than she had done for many nights.

By hints I had dropped from time to time, she had reason, she said, to think that I knew everything that concerned her

and her family, and if so, must be acquainted with the heavy curse her father had laid upon her, which had been dreadfully fulfilled in one part. She had been applying to her sister to obtain a revocation of it. "I tremble for the answer," said she, gasping, "for my sister is hard-hearted."

I said something reflecting on her family, but she took me up, saying I must not blame them, for what an enormity there was in her crime, which had set the best of parents in a bad light for resenting it.

I then besought her, while she was capable of such glorious instances of generosity and forgiveness, to extend her goodness to a man whose heart bled in every vein of it for the injuries he had done her, and who would make it the study of his whole life to repair them.

"You may let him know," said she, "that I reject him with my whole heart, yet that although I say this with such determination as shall leave no room for doubt, I say it not however with passion. On the contrary, tell him that I am trying to bring my mind to *pity* him (poor perjured wretch, what has he not to answer for!), and that I shall not think myself qualified for the state I am aspiring to, if, after a few struggles more, I cannot *forgive* him too, and I hope," clasping her hands together, uplifted, as were her eyes, "my dear *earthly* father will set me the example my *Heavenly* one has."

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

Saturday, July 22nd.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

WE are busy in preparing for our little journey, but I will be very ill if I cannot hear you are better before I go to the Isle of Wight.

Perhaps Mr. Hickman may make you a private visit before we set out. If I may not attend you myself, I shall not be easy except he does.

Adieu, my dear.

A. H.

(Mrs. Norton to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.)

July 24th.

Excuse, my dearest young lady, my long silence. My poor boy has been at death's door. Alas! my dear, let us both have your prayers.

Very angry letters have passed between your sister and Miss Howe.* Every one of your family is incensed against that young lady. I wish you would remonstrate against her warmth. It can do no good, for they will not believe but her interposition has your connivance, nor that you are so ill as Miss Howe assures them you are.

We have flying reports here and at Harlowe Place of some fresh insults which you have undergone, and that you are about to put yourself into Lady Betty Lawrance's protection. I believe they would now be glad (as I should be) that you would do so, and this perhaps will make them suspend for the present any determination in your favour.

How unhappy am I that the dangerous way my son is in prevents my attendance on you. Let me beg of you to write me word how you are.

May the Almighty bless you, my dearest young lady.

Your affectionate

J. NORTON.

(Clarissa to Mrs. Norton.)

Monday night, July 24th.

MY DEAR MRS. NORTON,

HAD I not fallen into fresh troubles, which disabled me for several days from holding a pen, I should have inquired after your health and that of your son. I pray Heaven, my dear friend, to give you comfort.

I am exceedingly concerned at Miss Howe's writing about me to my friends. I do assure you that I was ignorant of her intention so to do; nor has she let me know that she *did* write.

I am sure that nothing but my own application to my friends, and a full conviction of my contrition, will procure me favour. Least of all can I expect that your mediation or hers will avail me.

* Miss Howe, having obtained Clarissa's address at Smith's, had written to Arabella Harlowe acquainting her of Clarissa's dangerous illness: "She knows not that I write," she says. The information kindly meant is ill-received, and "sharp" billets pass between the Howe and Harlowe ladies.—ED.

[She gives a brief account of the arrest; of her dejection and apprehensions of being carried to her former lodgings; of Mr. Lovelace's avowed innocence as to that insult; of her release by Mr. Belford; of her clothes being sent to her, and of the desire of Mr. Lovelace and his friends that he should marry her. She thus proceeds]:—

I have written to my sister. I hope for a gentle answer. It is my *first* direct application, you know. I wish Miss Howe had left me to my own workings in this tender point.

It will be a great satisfaction to me to hear of your perfect recovery, and that my foster-brother is out of danger.

Don't be uneasy that you cannot be with me. I am happier than I expected to be among strangers. The people of the house where I am are courteous and honest. There is a widow who lodges in it, a good woman, who is the better for having been schooled in affliction.

I have a humane physician, whose fees are his least regard, and a worthy apothecary. My nurse is obliging, silent, and sober.

It would be one of my greatest comforts to have you with me—you who love me so dearly, who have been the sustainer of my infancy, by whose precepts I have been so much benefited. In your dear bosom could I repose all my griefs, and by your piety should be strengthened in what I have still to go through.

So you see, venerable and dear friend, that I am not turning to the dark side of my prospects.

Adieu, my dearest Mrs. Norton.

(Clarissa to Miss Arabella Harlowe.)

Friday, July 21st.

IF, my dearest sister, I did not think the state of my health very precarious, I should hardly have dared to approach you, even with my pen, after having found your censures so dreadfully justified as they have been.

I have not the courage to write to my father nor my mother. It is with trembling I address you, to beg of you to intercede for me that my father will revoke that heaviest part of the curse he laid upon me, which relates to hereafter; for as to the here, *I have indeed met with my punishment from the very wretch in whom I placed my confidence.*

As I hope not for restoration to favour, I may be allowed to be very earnest on this head, and I am sure my father would not have his poor child miserable for ever.

Not to give fresh offence, I will only subscribe myself
without a name, my dear and happy sister,
YOUR AFFLICTED SERVANT.

A letter directed for me at Mr. Smith's, a glover, in King
Street, Covent Garden, will come to hand.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Edgeware, July 24th.

WHAT pains thou takest to persuade thyself that the
lady's ill health is owing to the vile arrest, and to the implacableness of her friends. But 'tis no wonder that he who can sit down premeditatedly to do a bad action will content himself with a bad excuse, and yet what fools must he suppose the rest of the world to be if he imagines them as easy to be imposed upon, as he can impose upon himself.

* * * *

The lady shut herself up at six o'clock yesterday afternoon, and intends not to see company till seven or eight this, not even her nurse, imposing upon herself a severe fast. And why? *It is her BIRTHDAY!* Blooming, yet declining in her very blossom. What must be her reflections? What ought to be thine?

I have a little leisure, and am in a scribbling vein. Indulge me, Lovelace, in a few reflections.

We are taught to read the Bible when children as a rudiment only, and this may be the reason why we think ourselves above it at a maturer age. But in my uncle's illness I had the curiosity in some dull hours—lighting upon one in his closet—to dip into it, and then I found that there were *admirable things in it*. I have borrowed one from Mrs. Lovick, and some time I shall give the whole a perusal.

I cannot but say that I have some of the Old Testament history in my head; but, perhaps, am more obliged for it to Josephus than to the Bible.

Odd enough, with our pride and learning, that we choose to derive the little we know from the undercurrents, muddy ones too, when the clear, pellucid fountain-head is easier to be come at.

I fell upon a piece this evening. *The Sacred Classics*, written by one Blackwall.

I took it home, and had not read a dozen pages, when I was convinced that I ought be ashamed to think how greatly I have admired less noble and natural beauties in

Pagan authors. By my faith, Lovelace, I shall for the future have a better opinion of the good sense and taste of half a score parsons, whom I have fallen in with in my time, for *magnifying*, as I thought, the language and sentiments to be found in it in preference to ancient poets and philosophers.

It is now a convincing proof to me, and shames an infidel's presumption and ignorance, that those who know least are the greatest scoffers.

* * * *

About three o'clock I went again to Smith's. The lady was writing when I sent up my name, but admitted me. I saw a visible alteration in her countenance for the worse, and Mrs. Lovick respectfully accusing her of great assiduity to her pen, early and late, and of her abstinence the day before, I took notice of the alteration, and told her that her physician had greater hopes of her than she had of herself, and I would take the liberty to say that despair of recovery allowed not room for cure.

She said she neither despaired nor hoped. Then, stepping to the glass, with great composure, "My countenance," said she, "is indeed a picture of my heart . . . Writing is all my diversion. As to my hours, I have always been an early riser, but now rest is less in my power than ever. Sleep has a long time ago quarrelled with me, and will not be friends, although I have made the first advances. What *will be must*."

* * * *

She then stepped to her closet, and brought me a parcel sealed with three seals.

"Be so kind," said she, "as to give this to your friend. A grateful present it ought to be to him, for, sir, this packet contains such letters of his to me as, compared with his actions, would reflect dishonour on all his sex were they to fall into other hands. As to my letters to him, they are not many. He may either keep or destroy them, as he pleases."

I thought, Lovelace, I ought not to forego this opportunity to plead for you. I therefore urged all the arguments I could think of in your favour.

She heard me out with more attention than I had promised myself.

"I would not interrupt you, Mr. Belford," said she, "though I am far from being pleased with the subject of

your discourse. The motives for your pleas in his favour are generous. I love to see instances of generous friendship. But I have written my full mind on this subject to Miss Howe, who will communicate it to the ladies of his family. No more, therefore, I pray you, upon the topic."

Her apothecary came in. He advised air, and blamed her for the application he was told she made to her pen, and gave the doctor's opinion and his own, that she would recover if she would use the means.

She may write too much for her health, but I have observed on several occasions that when physical men are at a loss to prescribe, they inquire what their patients best like, or are most diverted with, and forbid them that.

But, noble-minded as they see this lady is, they know not half her nobleness, nor how deeply she is wounded; for, having been bent upon doing good, and on reclaiming a libertine whom she loved, she is disappointed in all her darling views, and will never be able, I fear, to look up with satisfaction enough in herself to make life desirable to her. For this lady had *other* views in living, than the common ones of eating, sleeping, dressing, visiting, and those other fashionable amusements which fill up the time of most of her sex. Her grief seems to me of such a nature, that *time*, which alleviates other affliction, will *increase hers*.

Thou, Lovelace, mightest have seen this superior excellence. In every word, sentiment, and action is it visible. But thy cursed inventions and intriguing spirit ran away with thee. 'Tis fit that the subject of thy wicked boast, and thy reflections on talents so misapplied, should be thy curse.

Mr. Goddard took his leave, and I was going to do so, when the maid came up and told her a gentleman was below who earnestly inquired after her health, and desired to see her—his name Hickman.

She was overjoyed, and bid the maid desire the gentleman to walk up.

I would have withdrawn, but she forbid it.

She shot to the stairs-head to receive him, and, taking his hand, asked half a dozen questions in relation to Miss Howe's health, acknowledging in high terms her goodness in sending him to see her, before she set out upon her little journey.

He gave her a letter from that young lady, which she put into her bosom, saying she would read it by-and-by.

He was visibly shocked to see how ill she looked.

"You look at me with concern, Mr. Hickman," said she.

"O, sir, times are strangely altered with me since I saw you last at my dear Miss Howe's! What a cheerful creature was I then! My heart at rest, my prospects charming, and beloved by everybody. But I will not pain you."

"Indeed, madam," said he, "I am grieved for you at my soul."

He turned away his face with visible grief in it.

Her own eyes glistened, but she turned to each of us, presenting one to the other—him to me "as a gentleman *truly* deserving to be called so," me to him "as *your* friend," indeed. How was I at that instant ashamed of myself! but, nevertheless, as a man of humanity, detesting my friend's baseness, and desirous of doing her all manner of good offices.

Mr. Hickman received my civilities with a coldness, which was to be expected *on your account*. The lady invited us both to breakfast with her in the morning.

I left them together, and went home.

July 27th.

I WENT this morning to breakfast, and found Mr. Hickman with the lady.

A good deal of heaviness and concern hung upon his countenance, but he received me with more respect than he did yesterday, which, I presume, was owing to the lady's favourable character of me.

He spoke very little, for I suppose they had all their talk out yesterday.

It seems he had tendered her money from Miss Howe, but could not induce her to take any. No wonder *I* was refused. She only said that if she had occasion, she would be obliged to nobody but Miss Howe.

The apothecary came before breakfast was over. Mr. Hickman asked him if he could give him any consolation for Miss Howe?

"The lady," he said, "would do well, if she would resolve to be so. The doctor is entirely of this opinion."

Mr. Hickman and I went afterwards to a coffee-house. He gave his sentiments of you with great freedom, but with the politeness of a gentleman.

He told me how determined the lady was against marrying you; that she had, early this morning, set herself to write a letter to Miss Howe, in answer to one he brought her; it was almost finished before he saw her at breakfast.

Miss Howe, her mother, and himself are to set out to the Isle of Wight on Monday next.

As the lady had refused to accept of money offered by Mr. Hickman, I said nothing of her parting with her clothes. I thought it would shock Miss Howe.

Mr. Hickman tells me, he should have been happy with Miss Howe some weeks ago; but that she will not marry while her dear friend is so unhappy.

This is a charming instance of *female friendship*.

* * * *

Mr. Hickman was excessively moved at taking leave. She charged him to represent everything to Miss Howe in the most favourable light that the truth would bear.

He told me of a tender passage at parting, which was that having saluted her at her door, he could not help once more taking the same liberty, in a more fervent manner, at the stairs-head, whither she accompanied him, offering to apologize for his freedom.

"Excuse you, Mr. Hickman! that I will; you are my brother and my friend; and to show you that the good man who is to be happy with my beloved Miss Howe is very dear to me, you shall carry to her this token of my love"—offering her sweet face to his salute, and pressing his hand between hers. "Her love of *me* will make it more agreeable to her." "And tell her," said she, dropping on one knee, with clasped hands, and uplifted eyes, "that thus you saw me, in the last moment of our parting, begging a blessing upon you both, and that you may be the delight and comfort of each other for many, very many, happy years!"

"Tears," said he, "fell from my eyes; and she retreating as soon as I raised her, I went downstairs dissatisfied with myself for going, yet unable to stay.

"I went into the back shop," continued the worthy man, "and recommended the angelic lady to the best care and attention the people could give."

* * * *

[Miss Howe is extremely fluttered at meeting Lovelace at a ball at Colonel Ambrose's, and gives Clarissa in her next letter some account of his behaviour, and the way he was received by some of the company.]

"HE entered," she says, "with an air so hateful to me, but so agreeable to every other eye, that I could have looked him dead for that."

After the general salutations, he singled out Mr. Hickman, and told him he had recollected some parts of his behaviour to him when he saw him last, which had made him think himself under obligation to his patience and politeness.

And so, indeed, he was.

Miss D'Oily, upon his complimenting her, among a knot of ladies, asked him, in their hearing, how Miss Clarissa Harlowe did?

He heard, he said, you were not so well as he wished you to be, and as you deserved.

"O Mr. Lovelace!" said she, "what have you to answer for on that young lady's account, if all be true that I have heard?"

"I have a great deal to answer for," said the unblushing villain; "but the dear lady has so many excellences, that little sins are great ones in her eye."

"*Little sins!*" replied Miss D'Oily. "Mr. Lovelace's character is so well known, that nobody believes he can commit *little* sins."

"You are very good to me, Miss D'Oily."

"Indeed I am not."

"Then I am the only person to whom you are *not* very good, and so I am the less obliged to you."

He turned, with an unconcerned air, to Miss Playford, and made her some genteel compliments. I believe you know her not. She visits his cousins Montague. Indeed he had something in his specious manner to say to everybody, and this soon quieted the disgust each person had at his entrance.

I still kept my seat, and he either saw me not, or would not see me, and addressed himself to my mother, taking her unwilling hand, with an air of high assurance.

"I am glad to see you here, madam. I hope Miss Howe is well. I have reason to complain greatly of her, but hope to owe to her the highest obligation that can be laid on man."

"My daughter, sir, is accustomed to be too warm and zealous in her friendships for either my tranquillity or her own."

I think she might have spared me this, though nobody heard it I believe but the person to whom it was spoken, and the lady who told it to me—for my mother spoke it low.

"We are not wholly, madam, to live for ourselves," said the vile hypocrite; "and what a heart must that be which can be insensible to the interests of a suffering friend?"

"This sentiment from Mr. Lovelace's mouth!" said my mother. "Forgive me, sir, but you can have no end, surely, in endeavouring to make *me* think as well of you as some innocent creatures have done, to their cost!"

She would have flung from him ; but, detaining her hand, "Be less severe, dear madam. You will allow that a faulty person may see his errors, and own and repent them, if treated mercifully."

"Your air, sir, seems not penitent."

"But, dearest madam, permit me to say, that I hope for your interest with your *charming* daughter ; to have it put into my power to convince all the world that there never was a truer penitent. And why this anger, dear madam ?"—for she struggled to get her hand out of his—"these violent airs—so *maidenly* !" (Impudent fellow.) "May I not ask if Miss Howe be here ?"

"She would not have been here," replied my mother, "had she known whom she had to see."

"And is she here, then ? Thank heaven !" He disengaged her hand, and stepped forward into company.

"Dear Miss Lloyd," said he, taking her hand, as he quitted my mother's, "tell me is Miss Arabella Harlowe here ? I was informed she would be. And this, and the opportunity of paying my compliments to your friend Miss Howe, were great inducements with me to attend the colonel."

Superlative assurance !

"Miss Arabella Harlowe, excuse me, sir," said Miss Lloyd, "would be very little inclined to meet you here or anywhere else."

"Perhaps so, my dear Miss Lloyd ; but, perhaps, for that very reason I am more desirous to see *her*."

"Miss Harlowe, sir," said Miss Biddulph, with a threatening air, "will hardly be here without her *brother*. I imagine, if one come both will come."

"Heaven grant they may !" said the wretch. "Nothing, Miss Biddulph, shall begin from me to disturb this assembly, I assure you, if they do. One calm half-hour's conversation with that brother and sister would be a most fortunate opportunity to me, in presence of the colonel and his lady, or whom else they should choose."

Then turning round he espied me, and, with a very low bow, approached me.

I was all in a flutter, you may suppose. He would have taken my hand. I refused it, all glowing with indignation, everybody's eyes upon us.

I went from him to the other end of the room and sat down, as I thought, out of his hated sight ; but presently I heard his odious voice whispering behind my chair, he

leaning upon the back of it with impudent unconcern. "*Charming Miss Howe!*" looking over my shoulder, "*One request—*" I started up from my seat; but could hardly stand for indignation. "O this sweet but becoming disdain!" whispered the creature, "I am sorry to give you all this emotion, but either here or at your own house let me entreat from you one quarter of an hour's audience."

"Not for a *kingdom*," fluttering my fan. I knew not what I did. But I could have killed him.

"We are so much observed, else on my knees, my dear Miss Howe, would I beg your interest with your charming friend."

"She'll have nothing to say to you."

"Killing words! But I have deserved them. I am so conscious of my demerits that I have no hope but in *your* interposition."

"*My* mediation, vilest of men! *My* mediation! I abhor you! From my *soul* I abhor you, vilest of men!" Three or four times I repeated these words, stammering too. I was excessively fluttered.

"You can call me nothing, madam, so bad as I will call myself. I *have* been, indeed, the vilest of men; but now I am not so. Permit me—everybody's eyes are upon us!—to exchange ten words with you, dearest Miss Howe, in whose presence you please, for your dear friend's sake, but ten words with you in the next apartment."

"It is an insult upon me to presume that I would exchange *one* with you if I could help it! Out of my way! Out of my sight, fellow!"

And away I would have flung, but he took my hand. I was excessively disordered. Everybody's eyes more and more intent upon us.

Mr. Hickman, whom my mother had drawn on one side to enjoin him a patience, came up just then with my mother, who had him by his sleeve.

"Mr. Hickman," said the bold wretch, "be my advocate but for ten words in the next apartment with Miss Howe, in your presence, and in yours, madam," to my mother.

"Hear, Nancy, what he has to say. To get rid of him, hear his *ten words*."

"Excuse me, madam! His very breath—unhand me, sir!"

He sighed and looked—O how the practised villain sighed and looked! He then let go my hand with such a reverence in his manner as brought blame upon me with some, that I

would not hear him. And this incensed me the more. O my dear, this man is *indeed* a devil! Such patience when he pleases! Such gentleness! Yet so resolute, so audacious!

I was going out of the assembly in great disorder. He was at the door as soon as I.

"How kind this is," said the wretch; and, ready to follow me, opened the door.

I turned back upon this, and not knowing what I did, snapped my fan just in his face, as he turned short upon me, and the powder flew from his wig.

Everybody seemed as much pleased as I was vexed.

He turned to Mr. Hickman, nettled at the powder flying and at the smiles of the company. "Mr. Hickman, you will be one of the happiest men in the world, because you are a *good* man, and will do nothing to provoke this passionate lady, and because she has too much good sense to be provoked without reason; but else, the Lord have mercy upon you!"

This Mr. Hickman, my dear, is too meek for a man. But my patient mother twits me that her passionate daughter ought to like him *the better* for that. But meek men abroad are not always meek men at home. I have observed that in more instances than one, and if they *were*, I should not, I verily think, like them the better for being so.

He then turned to my mother, resolved to be even with *her* too; "Where, good madam, could miss get all this spirit?"

The company around smiled, for my mother's high-spiritedness is pretty well known. She, sadly vexed, said, "Sir, you treat me as you do the rest of the world, but——"

"I beg pardon, madam," interrupted he, "I might have spared my question." And instantly, I retiring to the other end of the hall, he turned to Miss Playford. "What would I give, miss, to hear you sing that song you obliged us with at Lord M.'s!"

He then, as if nothing had happened, fell into a conversation with her upon music; and whisperingly sung to Miss Playford, holding her two hands with such airs of genteel unconcern, that it vexed me not a little to look round and see how pleased half the giddy fools of our sex were with him, notwithstanding his notorious wicked character. To this it is that such vile fellows owe much of their vileness; whereas, if they found themselves shunned and despised, and treated as beasts of prey, as they are, they would run to their caverns, and there howl by themselves.

He afterwards talked very seriously to Mr. Hickman, with breaks and starts of gaiety, turning to this lady and to that, and then to Mr. Hickman again, resuming a serious or a gay air at pleasure. He took everybody's eye, the women's especially, who were full of their whispering admirations of him, qualified with "*If's*" and "*But's*," and "*What pity's*," and such sort of stuff, that showed in their very dispraises too much liking.

His discourse to Mr. Hickman turned upon you, and his acknowledged injuries of you, though he could so lightly start from the subject and return to it.

I have no patience with such a devil.

He had the confidence to offer to take me out, but I refused him, and shunned him all I could, putting on the most contemptuous airs; but nothing could mortify him.

I wished twenty times I had not been there.

The gentlemen were as ready as I to wish he had broken his neck rather than been present, I believe, for nobody was regarded but he. So little of the fop, yet so elegant and rich in his dress, his person so specious, his air so intrepid, so much meaning and penetration in his face, so much gaiety, though a travelled gentleman, yet no affectation; and his courage and wit, the one so known, the other so dreaded, you must think the *petits-mâîtres* (of which there were four or five present) were most deplorably off in his company; and one grave gentleman observed to me (pleased to see me shun him as I did) that the poet's observation was too true, that the generality of ladies were rakes in their hearts, or they could not be so much taken with a man who had so notorious a character.

When the wretch saw how industriously I avoided him, shifting from one part of the hall to another, he at last boldly stepped up to me as my mother and Mr. Hickman were talking to me, and thus before them accosted me:—

"I beg your pardon, madam, but, by your mother's leave, I must have a few moments' conversation with you, either here or at your own house, and I beg you will give me opportunity."

"Nancy," said my mother, "hear what he has to say to you. In my presence you may, and better in the adjoining apartment, if it must be, than to come to you at our own house."

I retired to one corner of the hall, my mother following me; and he, taking Mr. Hickman under the arm, following

her. "Well, sir," said I, "what have you to say? Tell me *here!*"

"I have been telling Mr. Hickman," said he, "how much I am concerned for the most excellent woman in the world, and yet that she obtained such a glorious triumph over me the last time I had the honour to see her, as, with my penitence, ought to have abated her resentment, but that I will, with all my soul, enter into any measures to obtain her forgiveness of me. My cousins Montague have told you this. Lady Betty and Lady Sarah, and my Lord M., are engaged for my honour. I know your power with the dear creature. Will you be so good as to tell me if I may have any hopes?"

"If I must speak on this subject, let me tell you that you have broken her heart. You know not the value of the lady you have injured. You deserve her not, and she despises you, as she ought."

"Dear Miss Howe, mingle not passion with denunciations so severe. I must know my fate. I will go abroad once more, if I find her absolutely irreconcilable. But I hope she will give me leave to know my doom from her own mouth."

"It would be death for her to see you. And what must *you* be to be able to look her in the face?"

I then reproached him (with vehemence enough, you may believe) on his baseness; all your friends made your enemies; the vile house he had carried you to; the dreadful arrest; and told him of your deplorable illness, and resolution to die rather than have him.

He vindicated not any part of his conduct but that of the arrest, and so solemnly protested his sorrow for his usage of you, accusing himself in the freest manner, and by *deserved* appellations, that I promised to lay before you this part of our conversation. And now you have it.

My mother, as well as Mr. Hickman, believes, from what passed on this occasion, that he is touched in conscience for the wrongs he has done you; but, by his whole behaviour, I must own it seems to me that nothing can touch him for half an hour together. Yet I have no doubt that he would willingly marry you, and it piques his pride, I could see, that he should be denied—as it did mine, that such a wretch had dared to think it in his power to have such a woman whenever he pleased, and that it must be accounted a condescension and matter of obligation by all his own family that he would vouchsafe to think of marriage.

My mother, Miss Lloyd, and Miss Biddulph, who were inquisitive after the subject of our retired conversation, are all of opinion that you should be his.

You will let Mr. Hickman know your mind, and when he acquaints me with it I will tell you my own.

Meantime, may the news he will bring me of the state of your health be favourable, prays

Your ever affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

I AM sorry that I am obliged to repeat to you, my dear, that were I sure I should live *many years*, I would not hear Mr. Lovelace, much less can I think of him as I may not live *one*.

Your account of the gay, unconcerned behaviour of Mr. Lovelace at the colonel's does not surprise me at all, after I am told that he had the intrepidity to go thither, knowing who were *invited* and *expected*. Only this, my dear, I really wonder at, that Miss Howe could imagine that I could have a thought of such a man for a husband.

Poor wretch! I pity him, to see him fluttering about, abusing talents that were given him for excellent purposes, and dancing, fearless of danger, on the edge of a precipice!

I cannot but hope I may never more see him in this world!

I commend myself, my dearest Miss Howe, to your prayers, and conclude with repeated thanks for sending Mr. Hickman to me; and with wishes for your health and happiness, and for the speedy celebration of your nuptials.

Your ever affectionate and obliged

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

(Extract—Lovelace to Belford.)

I HARDLY at this present know what to do with myself but scribble. Tired with Lord M., who, in his recovery, has played upon me the fable of the Nurse, the Crying Child, and the Wolf—tired with my cousins Montague, though charming girls, were they not so near of kin—tired with Mowbray and Tourville, and their everlasting identity—tired with the country—tired of myself—longing for what I have not—I must go to town, and there have an interview with the charmer of my soul, for desperate diseases must have desperate remedies; and I only wait to know my doom from Miss Howe; and then, if it be rejection, I will try my fate, and

receive my sentence at her feet. But I will apprise thee of it beforehand, as I told thee, that thou mayest keep thy parole with the lady in the best manner thou canst.

R. L.

(Mrs. Norton to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.)

Friday, July 28th.

MY DEAREST YOUNG LADY,

I HAVE the consolation to tell you that my son is once again in a hopeful way as to his health. He desires his duty to you..

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Methinks I am sorry you refuse the wicked man, but doubt not, nevertheless, that your motives for doing so are more commendable than my wishes.

What a dreadful thing indeed was it for my dearest tender young lady to be arrested in the streets of London! How does my heart go over again for you—what yours must have suffered at that time! Yet this, to such a mind as yours, must be light compared to what you had suffered before.

O my dearest Miss Clary, how shall we know what to pray for, when we pray, but that *God's will may be done*, and that we may be *resigned to it*! When at nine years old, and afterwards at eleven, you had a dangerous fever, how did we all grieve and put up our vows to the Throne of Grace for your recovery! For all our lives were bound up in your life. Yet *now*, my dear, as it has proved, what a much more desirable event would it have been had we then lost you!

A sad thing to say! but it is in pure love to you that I say it.

I am glad you are with honest people. How dreadfully have you been used, that one should be glad of such a poor piece of justice as that.

May Heaven be your support in all your trials is the constant prayer, my dearest young lady, of

Your ever affectionate friend and servant,

JUDITH NORTON.

[Mrs. Norton again implores Mrs. Harlowe's consideration for Clarissa, on representing her sincere penitence; she adds her conviction that Clarissa "will not long be a trouble to anybody."

Mrs. Harlowe replies, that all the Harlowe family "are acquainted with the unhappy body's power of painting her distresses."]

"This will convince you!" she says, "that nothing will be heard in her favour.

"You say her heart is half-broken! Is it to be wondered at? was not her sin committed against warnings and the light of her own knowledge?"

* * * *

"Her father indeed has, at her earnest request, withdrawn the curse which, in a passion, he laid upon her at her first wicked flight from us. But Miss Howe (*it is a sad thing, Mrs. Norton, to suffer so many ways at once*) had made matters so difficult by her undue liberties with us all, as well by speech in all companies as by letters written to my Bella, that we could hardly prevail upon him to hear her letter read.

"She has made my lot heavy. To tell you the truth, I am enjoined not to receive anything of hers from any hand without leave. Should I therefore gratify my yearnings after her so far as to receive privately the letter you mention, what would the case be but to torment myself, without being able to do her good? And were it to be known—Mr. Harlowe is so passionate; and should it throw his gout into his stomach, as her rash flight did—indeed, indeed, I am very unhappy! For, O my good woman, she is my child still!

"And is she *really* ill?—so *very* ill? But she *ought* to sorrow. She has given a double measure of it.

"But does she really believe she shall not long trouble us? But, O my Norton, she must, she will, long trouble us; for can she think her death will put an end to our afflictions?"

"O forgive the almost distracted mother! You know how to allow for all this.

"But I choose not to know more of her than I dare *own* I have seen—and this for the sake of my outward quiet, although my inward peace suffers more and more by the compelled reserve.

* * * *

"I was forced to break off. But I will now try to conclude my long letter.

"I am sorry you are ill. But if you were well, I could not, for your own sake, wish you to go up. And as everybody values you here, I advise you not to interest yourself too warmly in her favour. Yet to forbid you to love the dear naughty creature, who can? O, my Norton, you *must* love her!—and so must I!

"I send you five guineas, to help you in your present illness, and your son's; for it must have lain heavy upon you. What

a sad thing, my dear good woman, that all *your* pains, and mine, for eighteen years, have, in so few months, been rendered thus! Yet I must be always your friend, and perhaps I may find an opportunity to pay you a visit, and then may weep with you. But, for the future, write nothing to me about the poor girl, that you think may not be communicated to us all.

"And I charge you, as you wish my peace, not to say anything of a letter you have from me, either to the naughty one, or to anybody else. It is some relief to write to you, who must share my affliction. A mother cannot forget her child, though that child could abandon her mother, and, in so doing, run away with all her mother's comforts! As I can truly say is the case of

"Your unhappy friend,

"CHARLOTTE HARLOWE."

(Extracts—Lovelace to Belford.)

Tuesday, August 1st.

I AM most confoundedly chagrined and disappointed; for here, on Saturday, arrived a messenger from Miss Howe, with a letter to my cousins, when Lady Sarah and Lady Betty came here, to sit in judgment upon it with the old peer and my two kinswomen. And never was bear so miserably baited as thy poor friend! And for what? Why, for the cruelty of Miss Harlowe.

"What the devil," cried I, "is all this for? Is it not enough to be despised and rejected? Can I help her implacable spirit? Would I not repair the evils I have made her suffer?" Then was I ready to curse them all, herself and Miss Howe for company; and heartily I swore that she should yet be mine.

I now swear it over again to thee. Were her death to follow in a week after the knot is tied, by the Lord of Heaven it *shall* be tied, and she shall die a Lovelace! Tell her so, if thou wilt; but, at the same time, tell her that I have no *view to her fortune*; and that I will solemnly resign that, and all pretensions to it, in whose favour she pleases, if she resign life issueless. I am not so low-minded a wretch as to be *guilty* of any morbid views to her fortune. Let her judge for herself then, whether it be not for her honour rather to leave this world a Lovelace than a Harlowe.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Friday, August 4th.

THE lady is extremely uneasy at the thoughts of your attempting to visit her. For Heaven's sake, your word being given, and for pity's sake, for she is really in a very weak and languishing way, let me beg of you not to think of it.

What, thinkest thou, is a request she had to make to me? No other than that I would be her *executor*! Her motives will appear before thee in proper time, and I dare to say will be satisfactory.

You cannot imagine how proud I am of this trust. I am afraid I shall too soon come into the execution of it. As she is always writing, what a melancholy pleasure will the perusal and disposition of her papers afford me! Such a sweetness of temper, so much patience and resignation.

* * * *

Saturday morning, August 5th.

I AM just returned from visiting the lady, and thanking her in person for the honour she has done me; and assuring her, if called to the sacred trust, of the utmost fidelity and exactness.

I found her very ill. She said she had received a second hard-hearted letter from her sister; and she had been writing a letter (and that on her knees) directly to her mother, which, *before*, she had not had the courage to do. It was for a last blessing and forgiveness.

* * * *

I let her know that I was going out of town till Monday: she wished me pleasure, and said she should be glad to see me on my return. Adieu!

J. B.

(Clarissa to her mother.)

Saturday, August 5th.

HONOURED MADAM,

No self-convicted criminal ever approached her angry and just judge with greater awe, nor with a truer contrition, than I do you by these lines.

Indeed I must say that if the matter of my humble prayer had not respected my future welfare, I had not dared to

take this liberty. But my heart is set upon it, as upon a thing next to God Almighty's forgiveness necessary for me.

Wherefore, on my knees, my ever-honoured mamma (for on my knees I write this letter), I do most humbly beg your blessing (I ask you not, madam, to call me your daughter) —“ *Lost, unhappy wretch, I forgive you! and may God bless you!* ”—This is all! Let me, on a blessed scrap of paper, but see one sentence to this effect, under your dear hand, that I may hold it to my heart in my most trying struggles, and I shall think it a passport to Heaven. And if I do not too much presume, and it were ~~we~~ instead of I, and both your honoured names subjoined to it, I should then have nothing more to wish. Then would I say, “Great and merciful God! thou seest here in this paper the poor unworthy creature absolved by her justly offended parents. O join, for my Redeemer's sake, thy all-gracious *fiat*, and receive a repentant sinner to the arms of thy mercy!”

Let me therefore, for God's sake, prevail upon you to pronounce me blest and forgiven, since you will thereby sprinkle comfort through the last hours of *your*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Saturday, August 5th.

THOU runnest on with thy cursed nonsensical rote, of dying, dying, dying! and, having once got the word by the end, canst not help foisting it in at every period. The devil take me if I don't think thou wouldst give her poison with thy own hands rather than she should recover, and rob thee of the merit of being a conjurer.

But no more of thy cursed knell. By my soul, I can neither eat, drink, nor sleep, nor, what is still worse, love any woman in the world but her. I turn my head from every one I meet, except by chance an eye, an air, a feature strikes me resembling hers in some glancing-by face; and then I cannot forbear looking again, though the second look recovers me, for there can be nobody like her.

But, Belford, the devil's in this woman. The more I think of her nonsense and obstinacy the less patience I have with her. Is it possible she can do herself, her family, her friends so much justice in any *other* way as by marrying me? Were she sure she should live but a day, she ought to die a wife. If her *Christian revenge* will not let her wish to do so for her *own* sake, ought she not for the sake of her family

and of her sex, which she pretends to have so much concern for ?

* * * *

I will venture one more letter to her. If that won't procure me an answer, I will endeavour to see her, let what will be the consequence. If she get out of my way I will do some mischief to the vixen she loves, and then quit the kingdom for ever. Tell her this, Jack, and that if *she* abandon me, *God* will, and what then will be the fate of her Lovelace ?

(Mr. Lovelace to Clarissa.)

Monday, August 7th.

LITTLE as I have reason to expect your patience, I cannot forbear to write to you once more, to put it in my power to atone, if possible to atone, for the injuries I have done you.

Your angelic purity and my awakened conscience are standing records of my detestable baseness to you. Forgive me, then, my dearest life, my earthly good. As you hope for pardon yourself, consent to meet me at the holy altar, and so give yourself a title to a repentant and affectionate heart.

Let me beg of you a few lines to encourage me. I am now awakened enough to think that to be forgiven by injured innocence is *necessary* to the Divine pardon.

* * * *

I solemnly assure you that no worldly views induce me to thus earnest address. All I beg for the present is a few lines to guide my doubtful steps and to encourage me to hope I may be permitted to style myself

Eternally yours,
R. LOVELACE.

(Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Robert Lovelace, Esq.)

Friday, August 11th.

It is a cruel alternative, to be either forced to see you or to write to you.

Were I capable of disguising my real sentiments, I might, I dare say, give you the remote hope you request, and yet keep all my resolutions. But I must tell you, sir, that were I to live more years than I may weeks I would not be yours.

Religion enjoins me not only to forgive injuries but to return good for evil. It is all my consolation that I am now in such a state of mind with regard to you that I can cheerfully obey its dictates. Accordingly I tell you that wherever you go I wish you happy.

And now having, with great reluctance, complied with one of your alternatives, I expect the fruits of it.

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Sunday, August 13th.

I DON'T know what the devil ails me, but I never was so much indisposed in my life. I cannot write with any spirit at all. What a plague can be the matter with me?

Lord M. paid me just now a cursed gloomy visit, to ask how I do after bleeding. His sisters both drove away yesterday, God be thanked. But they asked not my leave, and hardly bid me good-bye. My lord was more tender, and more dutiful, than I expected. Men are less unforgiving than women. I have reason to say so, I am sure. For, besides implacable Miss Harlowe, and the old ladies, the two Montague apes have not been near me yet.

* * * *

I can neither eat, drink, or sleep. A piteous case, Jack; if I should die now, they would say Miss Harlowe had broken my heart. That she vexes it is certain. Adieu, Jack.

R. L.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Monday, August 14th.

I AM extremely concerned for thy illness. I should be very sorry to lose thee. Yet, if thou diest so soon, I could wish from my soul it had been before the beginning of last April; as well for thy sake as for the sake of the most excellent woman in the world.

I will not trouble thee, in the way thou art in, with what passes here with Miss Harlowe. I wish thy repentance as swift as thy illness, and as efficacious, if thou diest. It is else to be feared that she and you will never meet in one place.

I told her how ill you are. "Poor man!" said she. "*Dangerously* ill, say you?"

"*Dangerously indeed*, madam, so Lord M. sends me word."

"God be merciful to him, if he die!" said the admirable creature. Then, after a pause, "Poor wretch! may he meet with the mercy he has not shown!"

I send this by a special messenger, for I am impatient to hear how it goes with thee. Thy true friend,

JOHN BELFORD.

(Extracts—Lovelace to Belford.)

Dost thou think I will lose such an angel?

* * * *

Hasten with particulars of her health. God for ever bless her! By all that is great and good I will not lose her.

Bid her hate me, and have me body and soul. I will be hers. R. L.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

THE lady is informed by a letter from Mrs. Norton, that Colonel Morden is just arrived in England. He is now the only person she wishes to see.

I conjure thee not to think of molesting this admirable woman.

Should she die in a few weeks, as I fear she will, it will be said thy visit has hastened her end.

* * * *

Poor Belton, I hear, is at death's door. A messenger has just come from him, who tells me he cannot die till he sees me. I cannot avoid going to the poor man, yet am unwilling to stir till I have an assurance from you that you will not disturb the lady.

In hopes thou wilt not, I wish thy perfect recovery; else that thou mayest relapse, and be confined to thy bed.

J. B.

(Mr. Belford to Clarissa.)

Saturday, August 19th.

MADAM,

I THINK myself obliged in honour to acquaint you that I fear Mr. Lovelace may try his fate by an interview with you. He flatters himself you are not so ill as I represent you to be.

* * * *

I beg you will not be in too much hurry. He cannot be in town before Monday, at soonest. If he resolve to come, I hope to be at Mrs. Smith's before him.

Your faithful servant,

J. BELFORD.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

That thou mightest have as little notice as possible, Jack, of the time I resolved to be in town, I set out as soon as I had dispatched my letter. I had no place ready, so went to my old lodgings, where my wardrobe is. I dressed myself in my never worn suit, and took a chair to Smith's, my heart bounding with anticipation, and acting my part in fancy till I arrived at Smith's, where the fellows set down their gay burden.

Off went their hats. Will, ready at hand in a new livery, up went the head, out rushed my honour, the women behind the counter all in flutters—respect and fear giving due solemnity to her features.

“Your servant, madam—Will, let the fellows move to some distance, and wait—You have a young lady lodges here, Miss Harlowe, madam, is she above?”

“Sir, sir, and please your honour” (the woman is struck with my figure, thought I), “Miss Harlowe, sir, there is, indeed, such a young lady lodges here, but—but—”

“But what, madam? I must see her. One pair of stairs, is it not? Don't trouble yourself, I shall find her apartment.” And was making towards the stairs.

“Sir, the lady—the lady is not at home, she is abroad, she is in the country.”

“In the country! not at home!—impossible! You will not pass this story upon me, good woman. I *must* see her. I have business of life and death with her.”

“Indeed, sir, the lady is not at home! Indeed, sir, she is abroad!”

She then rung a bell. “John,” cried she, “pray step down! Indeed, sir, the lady is not at home.”

Down came John, the good man of the house, when I expected one of his journeymen, by her saucy familiarity.

“My dear,” said she, “the gentleman will not believe Miss Harlowe is abroad.”

John bowed to my fine clothes. “Your servant, sir. Indeed, the lady is abroad. She went out of town this morning by six o'clock, into the country, by the doctor's advice.”

Still I would not believe either John or his wife. “I am sure,” said I, “she cannot be abroad. I heard she was very ill. She is not able to go out in a coach. Do you know Mr. Belford, friend?”

“Yes, sir; I have the honour to know Squire Belford,

He is gone into the country to visit a sick friend ; he went on Saturday, sir."

This had also been told from thy lodgings to Will, whom I sent to desire to see thee on thy first coming to town.

"Well, and Mr. Belford wrote me word that she was exceeding ill, how then can she be gone out?"

"O sir, she is very ill indeed. She could hardly walk to the coach."

Belford, thought I, *himself* knew nothing of the time of my coming, neither can he have received my letter of yesterday—and so ill, 'tis impossible she should go out.

"Where is her servant? Call her servant to me."

"Her servant, sir, is her nurse, she has no other. And *she* is gone with her."

"Well, friend, I must not believe you. You'll excuse me, but I must go upstairs myself." And was stepping up.

John hereupon put on a serious and a less respectful face. "Sir, this house is mine, and——"

"*And* what, friend?" not doubting then but she was above. "I must and will see her. I have an authority for it. I am a justice of the peace. I have a search-warrant."

And up I went, they following me, muttering, and in a plaguy flutter.

The first door I came to was locked. I tapped at it.

"The lady, sir, has the key of her own apartment."

"On the inside, I question not, my honest friend," tapping again. And being assured, if she heard my voice that her timorous and soft temper would make her betray herself by some flutters to my listening ear, I said aloud, "I am confident Miss Harlowe is here—dearest madam, open the door; admit me but for one moment to your presence."

But neither answer nor fluttering saluted my ear, and the people being very quiet, I led on to the next apartment. The key being on the outside, I opened it, and looked all round, and into the closet.

The man said he never saw so uncivil a gentleman in his life.

"Hark thee, friend," said I; "let me advise thee to be a little decent, or I shall teach thee a lesson thou never learnedst in all thy life."

"Sir," said he, "'tis not like a gentleman, to affront a man in his own house."

"Then prythee, man," replied I, "don't crow upon thine own dunghill."

I stepped back to the locked door. "My dear Miss Harlowe,

I beg of you to open the door, or I will break it open ;"—pushing hard against it, that it cracked again.

The man looked pale, and trembling with his fright, made a plaguy long face, and called to one of his bodice-makers above, "Joseph, *come down quickly*."

Joseph came down, a lion's-face fellow, thick, and short, and bushy-headed, like an old oak pollard. Then did master John put on a sturdier look. But I only hummed a tune, traversed all the other apartments, sounded the passages with my knuckles, to find whether there were private doors, and walked up the next pair of stairs singing 'all the way, John and Joseph, and Mrs. Smith, following me trembling.

I looked round me there, and went into two open-door bed-chambers ; searched the closets, the passages, and peeped through the keyhole of another. "No Miss Harlowe, by Jupiter ! What shall I do ? How will she be grieved that she is out of the way."

I said this on purpose to find out whether these people knew the lady's story, and had the answer I expected from Mrs. Smith—"I believe not, sir."

"Why so, Mrs. Smith ? Do you know who I am ?"

"I can guess, sir."

"Whom do you guess me to be ?"

"Your name is Mr. Lovelace, sir, I make no doubt."

"The very same. But how came you to guess so well, dame Smith ? You never saw me before. Did you ?"

Here, Jack, I laid out for a compliment and missed it.

"'Tis easy to guess, sir ; for there cannot be two such gentlemen as you."

"Well said, dame Smith. But mean you *good* or *bad* ?" *Handsome* was the least I thought she would have said.

"I leave you to guess, sir."

"Why, father Smith, thy wife is a wit, man ! Didst thou ever find that out before ? But where is widow Lovick, dame Smith ? My cousin John Belford says she is a very good woman. Is she within ? Or is she gone with Miss Harlowe too ?"

"She will be within by-and-by, sir. She is not with the lady."

"Well, but my good dear Mrs. Smith, whither is the lady gone ? And when will she return ?"

"I can't tell, sir."

"Don't tell fibs, dame Smith, don't tell fibs," chucking her under the chin, which made John's upper lip rise to his nose. "I am sure you know ! But here's another pair of

stairs ; let us see who lives up there ? But hold, here's another room locked up," tapping at the door. "Who's at home ?" cried I.

"That's Mrs. Lovick's apartment. She is gone out, and has the key with her."

"Widow Lovick !" rapping again, "I believe you are at home ; pray, open the door."

John and Joseph muttered and whispered together.

"No whispering, honest friends ; 'tis not manners to whisper. Joseph, what said John to thee ?"

"JOHN, sir !" disdainfully repeated the good woman.

"I beg pardon, Mrs. Smith ; but you see the force of example. Had *you* showed your honest man more respect, *I* should. There, honest master John ; why dost not pull off thy hat to me ? O, so thou wouldst, if thou hadst it on."

"None of your jeers, sir," cried John.

"Sir," said he, "I wish you'd walk down. The servants and working rooms are up those stairs ; and nobody's there that you want."

"Shall I go up and see if Miss Harlowe be there, Mrs. Smith ?"

"You may, sir, if you please ?"

"Then I won't go ; for, if she was, you would not be so obliging."

So downstairs led I, John and my dame following me.

I re-entered one of the first-floor rooms. "I have a great mind to be your lodger, for I never saw such obliging folks in my life. What rooms have you to let ?"

"None at all, sir."

"I am sorry for that. But whose is this ?"

"Mine, sir," said John.

"Thine, man ! Why then I will take it of thee. This, and a bed-chamber, and a garret for one servant, will content me. I will give thee thine own price, and half a guinea a day over, for those conveniences."

"For ten guineas a day, sir——"

"Hold, before thou speakest, consider. I won't be affronted, man."

"Sir, I wish you'd walk down," said the good woman.

"Really, sir, you take——"

"Great liberties, you would say, Mrs. Smith ?"

"Indeed, sir, I was going to say something like it."

"Well, then, I am glad I prevented you. But I must lodge with you till the lady returns. However, you may be wanted in the shop, so we will talk that over there."

Down I went, they paying diligent attendance on my steps.

I asked what it was they sold?

"Powder, and wash-balls, and snuff," they said, "and gloves and stockings."

"O, I'll be your customer. Will, do I want wash-balls?"

"Yes, and please your honour."

"Give him half a dozen, dame Smith."

I demanded where their rappee was. The good woman pointed to the place, and I took up a scollop-shell of it, refusing to let her weigh it, and filled my box. "And now, Mrs. Smith," said I, "where are your gloves?"

She showed me, and I chose four pair of them.

Just then, turning my eye to the door, I saw a pretty, genteel lady, with a footman after her, peeping in. I ran to her from behind the counter, and as she was making off, took her hand, and drew her into the shop, begging that she would be my customer, for that I had but just begun trade.

"What do you sell, sir?" said she, smiling, but a little surprised.

"Tapes, ribands, silk-laces, pins and needles, for I am a pedlar; powder, patches, wash-balls, stockings, garters, snuffs, and pincushions; don't we, Goody Smith?"

So in I gently drew her, with an air of great diligence and obligingness. "I have excellent gloves and wash-balls, madam; Rappee, Scotch, Portugal, and all sorts of snuffs."

"Well," said she, in a very good humour, "I'll encourage a young beginner for once. Here, Andrew (to her footman), 'you want a pair of gloves, don't you?'"

I took down a parcel of gloves, which Mrs. Smith pointed to, and came round to the fellow to fit them on.

"Madam," said I, and stepped behind the counter bowing, "now I hope you will buy something for yourself. Nobody shall use you better, nor sell you cheaper."

"Come," said she, "give me sixpennyworth of Portugal snuff."

They showed me where it was, and I served her, and said, when she would have paid me, I took nothing at my opening.

She told me I should not treat her.

"Well, with all my heart," said I; "'tis not for us tradesmen to be saucy, is it, Mrs. Smith?"

I put her sixpence in my pocket, and, seizing her hand, took notice to her of the crowd that had gathered about the door, and besought her to walk into the back shop with me.

a perfect woman-eater, and, no doubt, expected to see me with the claws of a lion and the fangs of a tiger. It was but policy to show them what a harmless, pleasant fellow I am. It was evident to me, by the good woman's calling them down, that she thought me a dangerous man. Whereas now, dame Smith having seen that I have the looks of a man, and laugh and joke like other people, they will all, at my next visit, be much more easy and pleasant to me, and we shall be as thoroughly acquainted as if we had known one another a twelvemonth.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

CURSE upon my stars! Disappointed again! It was about eight when I arrived at Smith's. The woman was in the shop.

"So, old acquaintance, how do you now? I know my love is above. Let her be acquainted that I am here, waiting for admission to her presence, and can take no denial. Tell her that I will approach her with the most respectful duty, and in whose company she pleases, and I will not touch the hem of her garment without her leave."

"Indeed, sir, you are mistaken. The lady is not in this house, nor near it."

"I'll see that. Will!"—beckoning him to me, and whispering—"see if thou canst any way find out (without losing sight of the door, lest she should be below-stairs) if she be in the neighbourhood, if not within."

Will bowed, and went off. Up went I, without further ceremony, attended now only by the good woman.

I went into each apartment, except that which was locked before, and was now also locked, and I called to my Clarissa in the voice of love; but by the still silence was convinced she was not there. Yet I doubted not but she was in the house.

I then went up two pair of stairs, and looked round the first room, but no Miss Harlowe.

"And who, pray, is in this room?" stopping at the door of another.

"A widow gentlewoman, sir—Mrs. Lovick."

"O my dear Mrs. Lovick!" said I, "I am intimately acquainted with Mrs. Lovick's character, from my cousin John Belford. I must see Mrs. Lovick by all means. Good Mrs. Lovick, open the door!"

She did.

"Your servant, madam. Be so good as excuse me. You have heard my story. You are an admirer of the most excellent woman in the world. Dear Mrs. Lovick, tell me what is become of her?"

"The poor lady, sir, went out yesterday, on purpose to avoid you."

"How so? She knew not that I would be here."

"She was afraid you would come. Ah, sir! what a pity is it that so fine a gentleman should make such ill returns for God's goodness to him!"

"You are an excellent woman, Mrs. Lovick—I know that by my cousin John Belford's account of you, and Miss Clarissa Harlowe is an angel."

"Miss Harlowe is indeed an angel," replied she; "and soon will be company for angels."

No jesting with such a woman as this, Jack.

"Tell me, good Mrs. Lovick, where I may see this dear lady. Upon my soul, I will neither fright nor offend her. I will only beg of her to hear me speak for one half quarter of an hour, and if she will have it so, I will never trouble her more."

"Sir," said the widow, "it would be death for her to see you. She was at home last night, but fitter to be in bed all day. She came home, she said, to die; and if she could not avoid your visit, she was unable to fly from you, and believed she should die in your presence."

"And yet go out again this morning early! How can that be, widow?"

"Why, sir, she rested not two hours, for fear of you. Her fear gave her strength, which she'll suffer for, when that fear is over. And finding herself, the more she thought of your visit, the less able to receive it, took chair, and is gone nobody knows whither. But, I believe, she intended to be carried to the waterside, in order to take boat; for she cannot bear a coach. It extremely incommoded her yesterday."

"But before we talk any further," said I, "if she be gone abroad, you can have no objection to my looking into every apartment above and below, because I am told she is actually in the house."

"Indeed, sir, she is *not*. You may satisfy yourself, if you please, but Mrs. Smith and I waited on her to her chair. We were forced to support her, she was so weak. She said, 'Whither *can* I go, Mrs. Lovick?—Whither *can* I go, Mrs. Smith? Cruel, cruel man! Tell him I called him so, if he

come again! God give him that peace which he denies me!"

"Sweet creature!" cried I, and looked down, and took out my handkerchief.

The widow wept. "I wish," said she, "I had never known so excellent a lady, and so great a sufferer! I love her as my own child!"

Mrs. Smith wept.

I then gave over the hope of seeing her for this time. I was extremely chagrined at my disappointment, and at the account they gave of her ill health.

"Would to heaven," said I, "she would put it in my power to repair her wrongs."

"O, sir," said the widow, "I never saw so sweet a creature; she is always accusing herself, and excusing her relations. And as to you, sir, she forgives you; she wishes you well, and happier than you will let her be. Why will you not, sir, let her die in peace? You don't look like a hard-hearted gentleman! How can you thus hunt and persecute a poor lady, whom none of her relations will look upon?—it makes my heart bleed for her."

My seat grew uneasy to me.

At last ^{*}they both ^{*}joined ^{*}warmly ^{*}to endeavour to prevail upon me to give up all thoughts of seeing the lady, but I could not hear of that. On the contrary, I besought Mrs. Smith to let me have one of her rooms till I could see her, and if but for two or three days, I would pay a year's rent for it, and quit the moment the interview was over. But they desired to be excused, and were sure the lady would not come to the house till I was gone, were it for a *month*.

This pleased me, for I found they did not think her so very ill as they would have me believe her to be, but I took no notice of the slip because I would not guard them against more of the like.

I told them I *must* and *would* see her, but that it should be with all the respect and veneration that heart could pay to excellence like hers, and that I would go round to all the churches in London and Westminster, where there were prayers or service, from sunrise to sunset, and haunt their house like a ghost, till I had the opportunity my soul panted after.

This I bid them tell her. And thus ended our serious conversation.

I took leave of them and went down, and stepping into

my chair, caused myself to be carried to Lincoln's Inn, and walked in the garden till chapel was opened, and then I went in and staid prayers, in hopes of seeing the dear creature enter, but to no purpose, and yet I prayed most devoutly that she might be conducted thither, either by my good angel or her own. And indeed I burn more than ever with impatience to be once more permitted to kneel at the feet of this adorable woman. And had I met her, or espied her in the chapel, it is my firm belief that I should not have been able to have forborne prostration to her for her *forgiveness*.

After service was over I stepped into my chair again and once more was carried to Smith's, in hopes I might have surprised her there, but no such happiness for thy friend. I staid in the back shop an hour and a half by my watch. John was mainly civil to me now, won over a little by my serious talk and the honour I professed for the lady. They all three wished matters could be made up between us, but still insisted that she could never get over her illness, and that her heart was broken. A cue, I suppose, they had from you.

* * * *

I long to hear how poor Belton is, to whom my best wishes.

R. L.

(Extracts—Belford to Lovelace.)

If thou wouldst be thought in earnest to move the poor lady in thy favour, thy behaviour at Smith's, when represented to her, will have a very consistent appearance, will it not? It will indeed confirm her opinion that the grave is more to be wished for by one of her serious turn than a husband incapable of reflection or remorse. I am extremely concerned for the poor unprotected lady. She was so weak on Saturday that I could not be admitted. To be driven out of her lodgings when she was fitter to be in bed is such a piece of cruelty as he only could be guilty of who could act as thou hast done by such an angel.

Thou must die as well as Belton.

When I arrived at Belton's, I found him excessively ill.

In a transport of joy he would have raised himself at my entrance, but had like to have fallen from his chair. When recovered, he called me his best friend, and burst into a flood of tears.

"Weak, weak, my dear Belford," said he. "Don't despise me, I beseech thee."

I could not help being visibly affected at the poor fellow's emotion.

"Tears, my dear Belton, are no signs of an *unmanly*, but contrarily, of a humane nature; they ease the overcharged heart, which would burst but for that kindly and natural relief.

"It is kind, my dear Belford, to keep me in countenance for this *womanish weakness*, as Mowbray has been calling it, and in so doing has convinced me that bottle-friends feel nothing but what moves in that little circle.

"Give me thy pity, Jack, 'tis balm to my wounded soul."

I assisted to get the poor man into bed. He was so weak and low that he could not bear the fatigue, and fainted away, and I verily thought was quite gone.

But recovering, and his doctor advising him to keep quiet, I retired.

Sunday morning I was called up at six o'clock, at the poor man's earnest request, and found him in a terrible agony. "O, Jack! Jack!" said he, looking wildly as if he had seen a spectre, "come nearer me," reaching out both arms, "come nearer me; dear, dear Belford, save me!" then clasping my arm with both his hands, and rearing up his head towards me, his eyes strangely rolling, "Save me, dear Belford, save me," repeated he.

I put my other arm about him.

"Save you from what, my dear Belton?" said I, "save you from what? Nothing shall hurt us. What must I save you from?"

Recovering from his terror, he sunk down again.

"O save me from myself," said he. "O, dear Jack, what a thing it is to die! What would I give for one year of my past life, only *one* year, and to have the same sense of things that I now have!"

I tried to comfort him as well as I could, but free-livers to free-livers are sorry death-bed comforters.

I used all the arguments I could think of to give him consolation.

In the afternoon of Sunday he was inquisitive after you.

Hadst thou heard what the poor dying Belton said on this occasion, perhaps it would have made thee serious for an *hour or two*.

"When poor Lovelace is brought," said he, "to a sick-bed, and his mind forebodes that it is impossible he should recover, when he revolves his past mis-spent life, his actions of offence to helpless innocents—in Miss Harlowe's case particularly—what then will he think of himself, or of the

past? His mind debilitated, unable to move without help, not one ray of hope, his conscience standing in the place of a thousand witnesses, his pains excruciating, weary of life, yet dreading that, in a few short hours, bad will be changed to worst of all, and that worst of all to last to all eternity—O, Jack, what will he then think of poor transitory gratifications? Tell him, dear Belford, how happy he is if he know his own happiness, how happy compared to his poor dying friend, that he has recovered from his illness, and has still an opportunity lent him for which I would give a thousand worlds had I them to give.”

Overwhelmed with grief and infirmity, he bowed his head, endeavouring to hide from the sight of the hardened Mowbray, who just then entered the room, those tears which he could not restrain.

“Sad, very sad, truly,” cried Mowbray, who sat himself down on one side of the bed, as I sat on the other, his eyes half-closed, his chin curled, leaving one at a loss to know whether stupid drowsiness or intense contemplation had got most hold of him.

“An excellent lesson, Mowbray,” said I. “It may one day—who knows how soon?—be our own case.”

Up started Mowbray, writhing and shaking himself as in an ague fit, his hands stretched over his head, yawning; and then recovering himself with another stretch. “What’s o’clock?” cried he, pulling out his watch, and stalking by long tip-toe strides through the room, down stairs he went, and meeting the maid in the passage, I heard him say, “Betty, bring me a bumper of claret; thy poor master and this damned Belford are enough to throw a Hercules into the vapours.”

Mowbray after this, amusing himself in our friend’s library, found out a passage in Lee’s *Œdipus*, which he would needs have to be extremely apt, and in he came full fraught with the notion of the courage it would give the dying man, and read it to him.

When the *sun sets*, shadows that show’d at noon
But small, appear most long and terrible :
So when we think fate hovers o’er our heads,
Our apprehensions shoot beyond all bounds ;
Owls, ravens, crickets, seem the watch of death ;
Nature’s worst vermin scare her godlike sons :
Echoes, the very leavings of a voice,
Grow babbling ghosts, and call us to our graves.
Each mole-hill thought swells to a huge Olympus ;
While we, fantastic dreamers, heave and puff,
And sweat with our imagination’s weight.

He expected praises for finding this out. But Belton, turning his head from him—"Ah, Dick," said he, "these are not the reflections of a dying man. What thou wilt one day feel, if it be what I now feel, will convince thee that the evils *before* thee and *with* thee, are more than the effects of imagination."

I was called twice on Sunday night to him; for the poor fellow, when his reflections on his past life annoy him most, is afraid of being left, and his eyes, they tell me, hunt about for me. "Where's Mr. Belford?" cries he; "beg of him to step to me—yet don't—yet do."

* * * *

What miscreants are we! What figures shall we make in these terrible hours!

* * * *

At his earnest request I sat up with him last night; and, poor man, it is impossible to tell thee how easy and safe he thought himself in my company for the first part of the night. "*A drowning man will catch at a straw*," says the proverb, and a straw was I with respect to any real help I could give him. He often awaked in terrors; and once calling out for me, "Dear Belford," said he, "where are you? Oh, there you are; give me your friendly hand." Then, grasping it, and putting his clammy, half-cold lips to it—"How kind! I fear everything when you are absent. But the presence of a friend, a sympathizing friend, oh, how comfortable!"

But about four in the morning he frightened me much; he waked with terrible groans, and endeavoured to speak. When he did—"Jack, Jack, Jack," five or six times repeated he as quick as thought; "now, now, now, save me, save me, save me. I am going—going, indeed!"

I threw my arms about him, and raised him upon his pillow as he was sinking (as if to hide himself) in the bedclothes, and staring wildly. "Where am I?" said he, a little recovering. "Did you not see him?" turning his head this way and that, horror in his countenance; "did you not see him?"

"See whom, see what, my dear Belton?"

"Oh, lay me upon the bed again!" cried he; "let me not die upon the floor. Lay me down gently, and stand by me. Leave me not! All, all will soon be over!"

"You are already, my dear Belton, upon the bed; you have not been upon the floor. You are faint for want of refreshment" (for he had refused several times to take any-

thing); "let me persuade you to take some of this cordial. I will leave you if you will not oblige me."

He readily took it, but said he could have sworn that Tom Metcalfe had been in the room, and had drawn him out of bed by the throat, upbraiding him with the injuries he had first done his sister, and then him, in the duel to which he owed that fever which cost him his life.

"Thou knowest the story, Lovelace, too well, to need my repeating it; but, mercy on us, if in these terrible moments all the evils we do rise to our affrighted imaginations. If so, what shocking scenes have I, but still what more shocking ones hast thou to go through, if, as the noble poet says—

"'If any sense at that sad time remains!'"

The doctor ordered him an opiate this morning. He slept several hours more quietly than he had done for the two past days, but it is more and more evident every hour that nature is almost worn out in him.

* * * *

Mowbray, quite tired with this house of mourning, intends to set out in the morning to find you. He was not a little rejoiced to hear you were in town.

* * * *

He has just taken leave of his poor friend, intending to go away early; an everlasting leave, I may venture to say, for I think he will hardly live till to-morrow night.

I believe the poor man would not have been sorry had he left him when I arrived, for 'tis a shocking creature, and enjoys too strong health to know how to pity the sick.

I must *repeat*, that I cannot but be very uneasy for the poor lady whom you so cruelly persecute, and that I do not think you have kept your honour with me. I was apprehensive, indeed, that you would attempt to see her as soon as you got well enough to come up, and I told her as much. But she could not, it is plain, bear the shock of your visit; and indeed she told me that she would not see you, though but for one half-hour, for the world.

Could she have prevailed upon herself, I know that the sight of her would have been as affecting to you as your visit could have been to her, when you had seen to what a lovely skeleton (for she is lovely still) you have in a few weeks reduced one of the most charming women in the world, and that in the full bloom of her youth and beauty.

Mowbray undertakes to carry this, that he may be more welcome to you, he says. God convert us both.

J. B.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Wednesday morning, August 23rd.

ALIVE, Jack, and in ecstasy ; likely to be once more a happy man, for I have received a letter from my beloved Miss Harlowe, and am setting out for Berks directly, to show the contents to my Lord M., and to receive the congratulations of all my kindred upon it.

I went last night, as I intended, to Smith's, but the dear creature was not returned at near ten o'clock ; and, lighting upon Tourville, I took him home with me, and made him sing me out of my megrims. I went to bed tolerably easy at two, and at eight this morning, as I was dressing, I had this letter brought to me by a chairman.

"Tuesday night, 11 o'clock, August 22nd.

"SIR,

"I HAVE good news to tell you. I am setting out with all diligence for my father's house. I am bid to hope that he will receive his poor penitent with a goodness peculiar to himself, for I am overjoyed with the assurance of a thorough reconciliation, through the interposition of a dear blessed friend, whom I always loved and honoured. I am so taken up with my preparation for this joyful and long wished-for journey that I cannot spare one moment for any other business, having several matters of the last importance to settle first. So pray, sir, don't disturb or interrupt me—I beseech you don't. You may possibly in time see me at my father's, at least if it be not your own fault.

"I will write a letter, which shall be sent you when I am got thither and received, till when I am, &c.,

"CLARISSA HARLOWE."

I despatched instantly a letter to the dear creature, assuring her with the most thankful joy that I would directly set out for Berks and wait the issue of the happy reconciliation, and the charming hopes she had filled me with. I declared it should be the study of my life to merit such transcendent goodness, and that there was nothing which her father or friends should require at my hands that I would not for her sake comply with, in order to promote and complete so desirable a reconciliation.

I hurried it away without taking a copy of it, and I have ordered the chariot-and-six to be got ready, and hey for M. Hall. I hope a letter from thee is on the road. And oblige me, if possible, with one letter before the divine lady sets out, accounting for this generous change.

I know to whose mediation all this is owing. It is to Colonel Morden's. She always, as she says, loved and honoured him, and he loved her above all his relations.

Dear charming creature! What a meeting will there be with her father and mother! What transports will this long wished-for reconciliation give her dutiful heart!

I shall long to see the promised letter when she gets to her father's, which, I hope, will give an account of the reception she meets with.

* * * *

There is a solemnity, however, I think in the style of her letter, which pleases and affects me at the same time. But as it is evident she loves me still, and hopes soon to see me at her father's, she could not help being a little solemn and half ashamed (dear blushing pretty rogue) to own her love after my usage of her.

And then her subscription, "Till when I am, Clarissa Harlowe," as much as to say, "after that I shall be, if not your own fault, Clarissa Lovelace."

* * * *

Mowbray is just arrived with thy letters.

I have engaged the varlet to bear me company into Berks.

If I return thy letters, let me have them again some time hence, say when I am married. Then I may give them a serious perusal.

When I am married!—what a sound has that!

I must wait with patience a sight of her till she is at her father's. And yet you say she is reduced to a shadow. I should be glad to see her every day till the happy one, that I might behold her hour by hour rising to her pristine glories, and at ease upon her reconciliation to her friends and our happy nuptials.

I shall be afraid to open thy next, lest it bring me the account of poor Belton's death. Yet, as there are no hopes of his recovery—but what should I say, unless the poor man were better fitted—but thy heavy sermon shall not affect me too much neither.

I enclose thy papers—return them, for there are some things in them which, at a proper season, a mortal man

should not avoid attending to, and thou seemest to have entered deeply into the shocking subject. But here I will end, lest I grow too serious.

* * * *

I must be at Lord M.'s to-morrow night, if possible, though ever so late.

Wouldst thou think that this varlet Mowbray is sorry that I am so near being happy with Miss Harlowe? And, egad, Jack, I know not what to say to it, now the fruit seems to be within my reach; but let what will come I'll stand to it, for I find I can't live without her.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Wednesday, 3 o'clock.

I WILL proceed where I left off in my last.

As soon as I had seen Mowbray mounted, I went to attend upon poor Belton, whom I found in dreadful agonies, in which he awoke, as he generally does.

He is struggling between life and death.—But I'll go in again.

Thursday, 1 o'clock in the morning.

ALL now must soon be over with him—poor, poor fellow! he has given me some hints of what he wanted to say, but all incoherent, interrupted by dying hiccups and convulsions.

* * * *

To hear the poor man wish he had never been born. To hear him pray to be nothing after death. Good God! how shocking.

By his incoherent hints I am afraid 'tis very bad with him. No pardon, no mercy, he repeats, can lie for him.

I hope I shall make a proper use of this lesson. Laugh at me, if thou wilt; but never, never more will I take the liberties I have taken; but whenever I am tempted will think of Belton's dying agonies, and what my own may be.

Four o'clock.

Now is all indeed over. Poor, poor Belton! By this time thou knowest if thy crimes are above the size of God's mercies. Now are every one's cares and attendance at an end. Now do we, thy friends, poor Belton, know the worst of thee, as to this life. Thou art released from insufferable tortures, both of body and mind.

I wish, indeed, I *heartily* wish, we could have seen one ray of comfort darting in upon his benighted mind before he

departed. But all, alas! to the very last gasp, was horror and confusion. And my only fear arises from this, that, till within the four last days of his life, he could not be brought to think he should die, though in a visible decline for months.

But we must leave poor Belton to that mercy of which we have all so much need; and, for my own part, I am resolved I will endeavour to begin to repent of my follies while my health is sound, my intellects untouched, and while it is in my power to make some reparation, if possible, to those I have wronged or misled. One day you will wish you had joined with me in the same resolution, and will confess there is more good sense in it than now perhaps you will own.

Seren o'clock, Thursday morning.

You are very earnest, by your last letter just given me, to hear again from me before you set out for Berks. I will, therefore, close with a few words upon the *only* subject in your letter which I can at present touch upon: and this is the letter of which you give me a copy from the lady.

Surely, Lovelace, this surprising letter cannot be a forgery of thy own, in order to carry on some view, and impose upon me—by the style of it, it cannot, though thou art a perfect Proteus.

I will only add another word, that I am your true friend and well-wisher,

J. BELFORD.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

August 24th.

I HAVE received thy letter in good time. I read a passage or two of it to Mowbray, and we both agree that thou art an absolute master of the lamentable. ¶

Poor Belton, what terrible conflicts were thy last! I hope, however, that he is happy; and I have the more hope because the hardness of his death is likely to be such a warning to *thee*. If it have the effect thou declarest it shall have, what a world of mischief will it prevent.

Thou sayest I may laugh at thee if I will. Not I, Jack; I do not take it to be a laughing subject, and I am heartily concerned at the loss we all have in poor Belton; and when I have leisure to contemplate the vanity of sublunary things—a subject that will now and then, in my gayest hours,

obtrude itself upon me, it is very likely that I may talk seriously with thee upon these topics.

* * * *

I am going down without seeing my beloved. I was a hasty fool to write her a letter promising I would not go near her till I saw her at her father's. One short visit could do her no harm. Mowbray and I will drop a tear apiece to the memory of poor Belton; but we will not accept thy verbal invitation to the funeral—we like not these dismal formalities.

R. L.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

August 26th.

On Thursday I assisted at the opening of poor Belton's will. He has left me sole executor, and bequeathed me a legacy of a hundred guineas.

Fatigued for want of rest, and in low spirits, I sent my compliments to the innocent sufferer to inquire after her health.

My servant saw Mrs. Smith, who told him she was glad I had come to town, for the lady was much worse than she had been.

It is impossible to account for her letter to you, or to reconcile the contents to the facts I have to communicate.

I was at Smith's by seven yesterday, and found that the lady was just gone in a chair to St. Dunstan's to prayers. They would have persuaded her against going, but she said she knew not but that it might be her last opportunity. Mrs. Lovick, dreading that she would be taken worse at church, walked thither before her.

Mrs. Smith told me she was so ill on Wednesday night that she had desired to receive the sacrament; and, accordingly, it was administered to her by the parson of the parish, whom she besought to take all opportunities of assisting her in her solemn preparation.

* * * *

I stayed till she came in. Being very weak, she went into the back shop, leaning upon Mrs. Lovick; and when she had sat down,—“I am glad to see you, Mr. Belford,” said she. “But, O sir, I am sadly harassed—your friend will not permit me to die in peace. You see how I am. Is there not a great alteration in me within this week?”

* * * *

A letter and packet were brought her by a man on horse-back, from Miss Howe, while we were talking. She retired upstairs to read it; and while I was in discourse with Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Lovick, the doctor and apothecary both came in together. They confirmed my fears as to the dangerous way she is in.

When she was told we were all three together, she desired us to walk up.

She rose to receive us, and, after asking two or three general questions relating to her health, addressed herself to us.

"As I may not," said she, "see you three gentlemen together again, let me take this opportunity to acknowledge my obligations to you all. I am inexpressibly obliged to you, sir, and to you," curtsying to the doctor and Mr. Goddard, "for your friendly and paternal care. This gentleman," bowing to me, "is the only Executor, under any circumstances, I can choose. I repeat, therefore, my thanks to you all, and God Almighty make you the amends which I cannot."

She retired with her eyes full—we looking at one another.

We had hardly recovered when she, smiling and cheerful, returned.

"Doctor," said she, seeing we had been moved, "you will excuse me the concern I give you, but as I have some preparations to make, I would beg you to give me your opinion. How long may it be before I may hope to be released from all my troubles?"

They hesitated.

"Don't be afraid to answer me," she said. "Tell me how long! and believe me, gentlemen, the shorter you tell me my time is likely to be, the more comfort you will give me."

He was silent.

"A fortnight, sir?"

He was still silent.

"Ten days?—a week?—How long, sir?" with smiling earnestness.

"If I *must* speak, madam—I am afraid."

"Afraid of what, doctor? Don't be afraid!—How long, sir?"

"That a fortnight or three weeks may deprive the world of the finest flower in it."

"A fortnight or three weeks yet! But God's will be done!"

"Sirs, I can but once more thank you," turning to each of us, "for all your goodness, and please, doctor, to order me

some more of those drops—they cheer me when I am a little low. You know the terms, sir.”

She retired with a serene air.

I went down to the women, and found that Mrs. Lovick was this day to bring her twenty guineas for her wearing apparel.

The widow told me she had expostulated, to which she made the affecting reply,—

“None of my friends will wear anything of mine,” said she. “I shall leave a great many good things behind me. And as to what I want the money for—don’t be surprised. But suppose I want it to purchase a house!”

“You are all mystery, madam; I don’t comprehend you.”

“Why then, Mrs. Lovick, I will explain myself. I have a man, not a woman, for my Executor; and think you that I will leave to his care anything that concerns my own person? Now, Mrs. Lovick,” smiling, “do you comprehend me?”

Mrs. Lovick wept.

“Oh, fie!” proceeded the lady, drying up her tears with her own handkerchief, and giving her a kiss; “why this kind weakness for one with whom you have been so little a while acquainted? Dear, good Mrs. Lovick, don’t be concerned for me on a prospect with which I have occasion to be pleased; but go to-morrow to your friends, and bring me the money they have agreed to give you.”

Thus, Lovelace, it is plain that she means to bespeak her *last* house! Here’s presence of mind! here’s tranquillity of heart, on the most affecting occasion! This is magnanimity, indeed! Couldst thou, or could I, with all our boisterous bravery and offensive false courage, act thus? Poor Belton! how unlike was thy behaviour!

When thou receivest the letter I am now writing, thou wilt see what will soon be the end of all thy injuries to this divine lady. I say, *when thou receivest it*; for I will delay it for some little time, lest thou shouldst take it into thy head (under pretence of resenting the disappointment her letter must give thee) to molest her again.

(Extracts from a letter of Arabella Harlowe to Clarissa.)

You must know we have had hints given us from several quarters that you have been used in such a manner by the villain you ran away with that his life would be answerable for his crime. If there be truth in this, you may yet justify your character in everything but your scandalous elopement,

and the law may reach the villain. Could we bring him to the gallows, what a revenge it would be to our injured family! If you will not agree to this, you can think of going to Pennsylvania for a few years till all is blown over.

Mr. Hartley has a sister at Pennsylvania, with whom he says you can board. If you were once there, it would rid your father and mother of a world of cares and scandal. If you will oblige me with an answer, it will be very condescending.

A. HARLOWE.

[To this Clarissa sends the meek answer that "if nothing should happen within a month to rid her friends of cares and scandals, she will, if able, be carried on board ship, and she will cheerfully obey her father and mother, although she might die on the passage." She even proposes that they should send Betty Barnes with her instead of her "poor Hannah," adding she will "make it worth her while to accompany her."]

(Extracts from a letter from Mrs. Norton to Clarissa.)

YOUR cousin Morden has been among your family. He is exceedingly concerned at your misfortunes, and is determined to go to Lord M.'s to hear from Mr. Lovelace's own mouth whether he intends to do you justice by marrying you or not.

He was extremely caressed at first, but I am told there is a little coldness between them and him at present.

* * * *

God be your comfort!

Your faithful

J. NORTON.

[Clarissa is greatly afflicted at these letters.—ED.]

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

[In this letter Clarissa tells her friend of the difficulties she had been under to avoid seeing Mr. Lovelace. She gives her the contents of the letter she wrote to him to divert him from his proposed visit; she is afraid, she says, that it is a step that is not strictly right, if allegory or metaphor be not allowable to one in her circumstances. She informs her of her cousin Morden's arrival, of his designed interview with Mr. Lovelace, and tells her what her apprehensions are upon it.]

* * * *

But I am very ill—I must drop my pen—a sudden faintness overspreads my heart! Excuse my crooked writing. Adieu, my dear! adieu!

Friday, 3 o'clock.

I THOUGHT I had taken my last farewell of you. I never was so very oddly affected—something that seemed totally to overwhelm my faculties; I don't know how to describe it. I believe I do amiss in writing so much and taking too much upon me; but an active mind, though clouded by bodily illness, cannot be idle.

I'll see if the air and a discontinued attention will help me. But if it will not, don't be concerned for me, my dear. I shall be happy—nay, I am more so already than of late I thought I could ever be in this life. Yet how this *body* encumbers!

Seven o'clock.

I COULD not send this letter away with so melancholy an ending, as *you* would have thought it. So I deferred closing it, till I saw how it should be on my return from my airing; and now I must say I am quite another thing.

I wish you would let me give you and Mr. Hickman joy. Do, my dear; I should take some to *myself* if you would.

My respectful compliments to all your friends.

* * * *

I have just now been surprised with a letter from one whom I long ago gave up all thoughts of hearing from. From Mr. Wyerley. I enclose it. You'll be surprised at it as much as I was. This seems to be a man whom I *might* have reclaimed. But I could not love him. Yet I hope I never treated him with arrogance. Indeed, my dear, I think I refused him with more gentleness than you retain somebody else. I will enclose the rough draught of my answer as soon as I have transcribed it.

I am, and will be, to the latest moment, *your truly affectionate and obliged servant,*

CL. HARLOWE.

(Mr. Wyerley * to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.)

August 23rd.

DEAREST MADAM,

You will be surprised to find renewed, at this distance of time, an address so positively, though so politely discouraged; but, however it be received, I *must* renew it. Everybody has heard that you have been vilely treated by a man, who,

* A former suitor of Clarissa's.

to treat *you* ill, must be the vilest of men. Everybody knows your just resentment of his base treatment: that you are determined never to be reconciled to him, and that you persist in these sentiments against all the entreaties of his noble relations—against all the prayers and repentance of his ignoble self. And all the world that have the honour to know *you*, or have heard of *him*, applaud your resolution as worthy of yourself, and that strict honour which was always attributed to you by every one who spoke of you.

But, madam, were all the world to have been of a different opinion it could never have altered mine. I ever loved you, ever *must* love you. I endeavoured to resign myself to my hard fate. I sat down seemingly contented. And I endeavoured to make all my friends and companions think I was. But nobody knows what pangs this self-denial cost me. In vain did travel or lively company offer themselves, with redoubled force did my passion for you renew my unhappiness when I looked into my own heart, for there did your charming image sit enthroned.

I deplore your misfortunes for your *own* sake, which, nevertheless, encourage *me* to renew my bold hope. I know not particulars. I dare not inquire after them, because my sufferings would be increased with the knowledge of what *yours* have been. I therefore desire not to know more than what common report wounds my ears with. Whatever be those misfortunes, I shall bless the occasion for *my* sake, if my renewed address be not rejected. Only give me hope of this—not absolutely to *reject* me, and I will love you more than I ever loved you, for your sufferings.

If I am still to be the most unhappy of men, let your pen by *one line* tell me so. If I am permitted to indulge a hope, however distant, your *silence* shall be deemed by me the happiest indication of it that you can give—except that *still* happier—(the happiest that *can* befall me) a signification that you will accept the tender of that life and fortune which it would be my pride and my glory to sacrifice in your service.

Be your determination as it may, I must love you. Nor will I ever change my condition while you live. Having once had the presumption to address *you*, I cannot stoop to think of any other woman, and this I solemnly declare, be your determination what it will. I am, dearest madam, your most devoted and ever affectionate and faithful servant,

ALEXANDER WYERLEY.

[Clarissa in reply thanks Mr. Wyerley for his generosity, gently declines his proposals, and ends her letter thus :—

As to the resolution you solemnly make, not to marry while I live, I should be concerned at it, were I not sure that you may keep it without detriment to yourself; since a very few days will 'convince you that I am got above all human dependence, and that there is no need of that protection and favour which you so generously offer to, sir, your obliged well-wisher and humble servant,

CL. HARLOWE.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Monday noon, August 28th.

ABOUT the time of poor Belton's interment last night, as near as we could guess, Lord M., Mowbray, and myself, toasted once, "To the memory of honest Tom Belton," and by a quick transition to the living, "Health to Miss Harlowe," which Lord M. obligingly began; and "To the happy reconciliation." Then we stuck in a remembrance, "To honest Jack Belford," who, of late, we all agreed, is become an useful and humane man, and one who prefers his friend's service to his own.

Let me whisper a word or two in thy ear. I begin to be afraid that this letter was a stratagem to get me out of town, for, in the first place, Tourville, in a letter I received this morning, tells me that the lady is actually very ill. (I am sorry for it with all my soul.) This, thou'lt say, I may think a reason why she cannot *set out as yet*; but then I have heard, on the other hand, that the family is as implacable as ever, and my lord and I expect this very afternoon a visit from Colonel Morden, who undertakes, it seems, to question me as to my intention with regard to his cousin.

This convinces me that if she *has* apprised her friends of my offers to her, they will not believe me to be in earnest, till assured so by my own mouth. But then I understand that the intended visit is an officiousness of Morden's own, without the desire of any of her friends.

Now, Jack, what can a man make of all this? And yet, when I read her letter, what can one say? Surely, the dear little rogue will not lie.

I never knew her dispense with her word but once, and that was when she promised to forgive me after the dreadful fire, and yet would not see me the next day, and afterwards

made her escape to Hampstead in order to avoid forgiving me.

And what, after all, would this lady deserve if she has deceived me in this case? For did she not set me prancing away upon Lord M.'s best nag, to Lady Sarah's, and to Lady Betty's, with an erect and triumphing countenance to show them her letter to me?

And let me tell thee that I have received their congratulations upon it.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

August 28th.

I got to town in the evening, and went directly to Smith's. I found Mrs. Lovick and Mrs. Smith in the back shop, and I saw they had both been in tears. They rejoiced to see me, and told me that the doctor and Mr. Goddard were but just gone, as was also the worthy clergyman, who often comes to pray by her, and all three were of opinion that she would hardly live to see another week. I was not so much surprised as grieved, for I had feared as much when I left her on Saturday.

I sent up my compliments, and she returned that she would take it a favour if I would call upon her in the morning by eight o'clock. Mrs. Lovick told me that she had fainted away on Saturday while she was writing, and having received benefit then by a little turn in a chair, she was carried abroad again. She returned somewhat better, and wrote till late, yet had a pretty good night, and went to Covent Garden church in the morning, but came home so ill that she was obliged to lie down.

When she arose, seeing how much grieved Mrs. Lovick and Mrs. Smith were for her, she made apologies for the trouble she gave them: "You were happy," said she, "before I came hither. It was a cruel thing in me to come among honest strangers, and to be sick and die with you."

When they touched upon the irreconcilableness of her friends, "I have had ill offices done me to them," said she, "and they do not know how ill I am, nor will they believe anything I write. But yet I cannot sometimes forbear thinking it a little hard that out of so many near and dear friends, not one of them will vouchsafe to look upon me. No old servant, no old friend to be permitted to come near me without being sure of incurring displeasure. And to have such a great work to go through by myself, a young creature as

I am, and to have everything to think of as to my temporal matters, and to order, to my very interment. No dear mother," said the sweet sufferer, "to pray by me and bless me! No kind sister to soothe and comfort me! But come," recollected she, "how do I know but all is for the best, if I can but make a right use of my discomforts. Pray for me, Mrs. Lovick—pray for me, Mrs. Smith, that I may—I have great need of your prayers. This cruel man has discomposed me. His persecutions have given me a pain just here," putting her hand to her heart. "What a step has he made me take to avoid him! Who can *touch pitch and not be defiled*? He has made a bad spirit take possession of me, I think; broken in upon all my duties, and will not yet, I doubt, let me be at rest. Indeed he is very cruel; but this is one of my trials, I believe. By God's grace I shall be easier to-morrow, and especially if I have no more of his tormentings, and I can get a tolerable night. I will sit up till eleven that I may."

She said, that though this was so heavy a day with her, she was at other times, within these few days past especially, blessed with bright hours, and particularly that she had now and then such joyful assurances (which she hoped were not presumptuous ones) that God would receive her to his mercy, that she could hardly contain herself, and was ready to think herself above this earth while she was in it. "And what," inferred she to Mrs. Lovick, "must be the state itself, the very aspirations after which have often cast a light through the thickest darkness, and when I have been at the lowest ebb have dispelled the black clouds of despondency?—as I hope they soon will this spirit of repining."

She had a pretty good night, it seems, and this morning went in a chair to St. Dunstan's church.

The chairman told Mrs. Smith that after prayers they carried her to a house in Fleet Street, whither they never waited on her before. And where dost thou think this was? Why to an undertaker's! Good Heaven, what a woman is this! She went into the back shop and talked with the master of it about half an hour, and came from him with great serenity, he waiting upon her to her chair with a respectful countenance, but full of curiosity and seriousness.

'Tis evident that she then went to bespeak her *house* that she talked of. "*As soon as you can, sir,*" were her words to him as she got into her chair. Mrs. Smith told me this with the same surprise and grief that I heard it.

She was very ill in the afternoon, having got cold either at

St. Dunstan's or at chapel, and sent for the clergyman to pray by her. The women, unknown to her, sent for Dr. H. and Mr. Goddard, who were just gone, as I told you, when I came to pay my respects to her this evening.

I long for to-morrow, that I may see her; and yet 'tis such a melancholy longing as I never experienced and know not how to describe.

Tuesday, August 29th.

I WAS at Smith's at half an hour after seven. They told me that the lady was gone in a chair to St. Dunstan's, but was better than she had been on either of the two preceding days, and that she said to Mrs. Lovick and Mrs. Smith, as she went into the chair, "I have a good deal to answer for to you, my good friends, for my vapourish conversation of last night."

"If, Mrs. Lovick," said she, smiling, "I have no new matters to discompose me, I believe my spirits will hold out purely."

She returned immediately after prayers.

"Mr. Belford," said she, as she entered the back shop where I was, "I am very glad to see you. You have been performing for your poor friend a kind office. Is it not a little hard upon you, that these troubles should fall so thick to your lot? But they are charitable offices; and it is a praise to your humanity that poor dying people know not where to choose so well."

I told her I was sorry to hear she had been so ill since I had the honour to attend her, but rejoiced to find that now she seemed a good deal better.

"It will be sometimes better and sometimes worse," replied she, "with poor creatures when they are balancing between life and death. But no more of these matters just now. I hope, sir, you'll breakfast with me. I was quite vapourish yesterday. I had a very bad spirit upon me—had I not, Mrs. Smith? But I hope I shall be no more so! and to-day I am perfectly serene. This day rises upon me as if it would be a bright one."

She desired me to walk up, and invited Mr. Smith and his wife, and Mrs. Lovick also, to breakfast with her. I was better pleased with her liveliness than with her looks.

The good people retiring after breakfast, the following conversation passed between us:—

"Pray, sir, let me ask you," said she, "if you think I may

promise myself that I shall be no more molested by your friend ? ”

I hesitated ; for how could I answer for such a man ?

“ What shall I do if he comes again ? You see how I am. I cannot fly from him now. If he has any pity left for the poor creature whom he has thus reduced, let him not come. But have you heard from him lately ? And will he come ? ”

“ I hope not, madam. I have not heard from him since Thursday last, that he went out of town rejoicing in the hopes your letter gave him of a reconciliation between your friends and you, and that he might in good time see you at your father's ; and he is gone down to give all his friends joy of the news, and is in high spirits upon it.”

“ Alas for me ! I shall then surely have him come up to persecute me again ! As soon as he discovers that that was only a stratagem to keep him away, he will come, and who knows but even *now* he is upon the road ? I thought I was so bad, that I should have been out of his and everybody's way before now ; for I expected not that this contrivance would serve me above two or three days ; and by this time he must have found out that I am not so happy as to have any hope of a reconciliation with my family ; and then he will come, if it be only in revenge for what he will think a deceit ; not, I hope, a wicked one.”

I believe I looked surprised to hear her confess that her letter was a stratagem only ; for she said, “ You wonder, Mr. Belford, I observe, that I could be *guilty of such an artifice*. I doubt it is *not right*, it was done in a hurry of spirits. How could I see a man who had so mortally injured me ; yet pretending sorrow for his crimes, and wanting to see me, could behave with so much shocking levity, as he did, to the honest people of the house ? Yet, 'tis strange too, that neither you nor he found out my meaning on perusal of my letter. You have seen what I wrote, no doubt ? ”

“ I have, madam.” And then I began to account for it as an *innocent artifice*.

“ Thus far, indeed, sir, it is *innocent*, that I meant him no hurt, and had a *right* to the effect I hoped for from it ; and he had *none* to invade me. But have you, sir, that letter of his, in which he gives you (as I suppose he does) the copy of mine ? ”

“ I have, madam ; ” and pulled it out of my letter-case ; but hesitating.

“ Nay, sir,” said she, “ be pleased to read my letter to

yourself—I desire not to see *his*—and see if you can be longer a stranger to a meaning so obvious.”

I read it to myself.

“Indeed, madam, I can find nothing but that you are going down to Harlowe Place, to be reconciled to your father, and other friends; and Mr. Lovelace presumed that a letter from your sister, which he saw brought when he was at Mr. Smith’s, gave you the welcome news of it.”

She then explained all to me. She said,—“A *religious* meaning is couched under it;” and that’s the reason neither you nor I could find it out.

“Read but for my *father’s house, Heaven*,” said she; “and for the interposition of my dear blessed friend, suppose the *mediation* of my *Saviour* (which I humbly rely upon), and all the rest of the letter will be accounted for. I hope,” repeated she, “that it is a pardonable artifice. But I am afraid it is not strictly right.”

I read it so, and stood astonished for a minute at her invention, her piety, her charity, and at thine and mine own stupidity, to be thus taken in.

And now, thou vile Lovelace, what hast thou to do, no hopes left for thee but to hang, drown, or shoot thyself, for an outwitted boaster?

My surprise being a little over, she proceeded:—

“As to the letter that came from my sister while your friend was here, you will *soon* see, sir, that it is the cruellest letter she ever wrote me.”

And then she expressed a deep concern for what might be the consequence of Colonel Morden’s intended visit to you; and besought me, that if now, or at any time hereafter, I had opportunity to prevent any further mischief, without any detriment or danger to myself, I would do it.

I assured her of the most particular attention to this and to all her commands; and that in a manner so agreeable to her, that she invoked a blessing upon me for my goodness, as she called it, to a desolate creature, who suffered under the *worst of orphanage*; those were her words.

She then went back to her uneasiness for fear of your molesting her again; and said:

“If you have any influence over him, Mr. Belford, prevail upon him, that he will give me the assurance that the short remainder of my time shall be all my own. I have *need* of it—indeed I have. Why will he wish to interrupt me in my duty? Has he not punished me enough for my preference of him to all his sex? Has he not destroyed my fame and for-

tune? And will not his causeless vengeance upon me be complete unless he ruin my soul too? Excuse me, sir, for this vehemence! But, indeed, it greatly imports me to know that I shall be no more disturbed by him. And yet, with all this aversion, I would sooner give way to his visit, though I were to expire the moment I saw him, than to be the cause of any fatal misunderstanding between you and him."

I assured her that I would make such a representation of the matter to you, and of the state of her health, that I would undertake to *answer for you*, that you would not attempt to come near her.

And for this reason, Lovelace, do I lay the whole matter before you, and desire you will authorize me to dissipate her fears.

This gave her a little satisfaction; and then she said, that had I not told her that I *could* promise for you, she was determined, ill as she is, to remove somewhere out of my knowledge, as well as out of yours. "And yet, to have been obliged to leave people I am but just got acquainted with," said the poor lady, "and to have died among perfect strangers, would have completed my hardships."

This conversation, I found, from the length and nature of it, had fatigued her; and, seeing her change colour once or twice, I made that my excuse, and took leave of her; desiring her permission, however, to attend her in the evening, for I could not help telling her that every time I saw her I more and more considered her as a beatified spirit, and as one sent from Heaven to draw me after her, out of the miry gulph in which I had been so long immersed.

And laugh at me if thou wilt, but it is true, that every time I approach her, I cannot but look upon her as one just entering into a companionship with saints and angels.

In the evening she was so low and weak that I took my leave of her in less than a quarter of an hour. I went directly home, where, to the pleasure and wonder of my cousin and her family, I now pass many honest evenings, which they impute to your being out of town.

I long for the particulars of the conversation between you and Mr. Morden; the lady, as I have hinted, is full of apprehensions about it. Send me back this packet when perused, for I have not had either time or patience to take a copy of it. And, I beseech you, enable me to make good my engagements to the poor lady that you will not invade her again.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Tuesday morning, August 29th.

Now, Jack, will I give thee an account of what passed on occasion of the visit made us by Colonel Morden.

He came on horseback, attended by one servant, and Lord M. received him, as a relation of Miss Harlowe's, with the highest marks of civility and respect.

After some general talk of the times and of the weather, and such nonsense as Englishmen generally make their introductory topics to conversation, the colonel addressed himself to Lord M. and to me.

[The conversation, exceedingly prolix, begins with praises of Clarissa on all sides; but Colonel Morden, putting the plain question to Lovelace whether he will make reparation by marrying Clarissa, Lovelace grows angry. Lord M. tries to make peace between the two gentlemen, and begs Colonel Morden to let the cause have a fair trial.]

"At your request, my lord," says Colonel Morden, "I should have hoped Mr. Lovelace was disposed to do justice, especially when by doing such justice he would do himself the highest honour."

Lovel. "This is in very high language, colonel."

Col. "*High* language, Mr. Lovelace; is it not *just* language?"

Lovel. "It is, colonel; and I think the man that does honour to Miss Clarissa Harlowe does me honour. But, nevertheless, there is a manner in speaking that may be liable to exception, where the words, without that matter, can bear none."

Col. "Your observation in a general way is undoubtedly just; but *if* you have the value for my cousin that you say you have, you must needs think——"

Lovel. "You must allow me, sir, to interrupt you. If I have the value I *say* I have. I hope, sir, when I *say* I *have* that value, there is no room for that *if*, pronounced, as you pronounced it, with an emphasis."

* * * *

Lord M. "Gentlemen, let me desire you to lay your heads together amicably, and think whether there be anything to be done to make all end happily for the lady."

Lovel. "But hold, my lord, let me say one thing: I think a gentleman ought not to put up tamely with one or two severe things that the colonel has said."

Lord M. "What the devil canst thou mean? Thou hast

nothing to do but to confirm to the colonel that thou art willing to marry Miss Harlowe if she will have thee."

Col. "Mr. Lovelace will not scruple to say *that*, I suppose. But if you think, Mr. Lovelace, I have said anything I should *not* have said, I suppose it is this: that the man who has shown so little of the *thing* honour, to a defenceless, unprotected woman, ought not to stand so nicely upon the *empty name* of it with a man who is expostulating with him upon it. I am sorry to have cause to say this, Mr. Lovelace; but I would, on the same occasion, repeat it to a king upon his throne, and surrounded by all his guards."

Lord M. "But what is all this but more *sacks upon the mill*—more *coals upon the fire*? You have a mind to quarrel, both of you, I see that. Are you not willing, nephew, to marry this lady, if she can be prevailed upon to have you?"

Lovel. "Damn me, my lord, if I'd marry an empress upon such treatment as this."

Col. "I came not hither to seek the occasion; but if it be offered me I won't refuse it. And since we find we disturb my good Lord M., I'll take my leave, and will go home by the way of St. Alban's."

Lovel. "I'll see you part of the way, with all my heart, colonel."

Col. "I accept your civility very cheerfully, Mr. Lovelace."

[Lord M. interposes again, and the gentlemen growing calmer, Lovelace adds]:—

I told him of my sincere offers of marriage. I made no difficulty, I said, to own my apprehensions that my unhappy behaviour to her had greatly affected her; but that it was the implacableness of her friends that had thrown her into despair, and given her a contempt for life. I told him that she had been so good as to send me a letter to divert me from a visit my heart was set upon making her—a letter on which I built great hopes, because she assured me in it that she was *going to her father's*, and that *I might see her there, when she was received, if it were not my own fault*.

Col. "Is it possible? And were you, sir, thus earnest? And did she send you such a letter?"

Lord M. proposed to enter into the proof of all this; he said, in his phraseological way, *that one story was good till another was heard*; that the Harlowe family and I, 'twas true, had behaved like so many *Orsons* to one another, and

that they had been very free with all our family besides; that nevertheless, for the lady's sake more than for theirs, or even for *mine* (he could tell me), he would do greater things for me than they could ask, if she could be brought to have me; and that this he would sooner have declared, if he could have brought us sooner to patience and a good understanding.

The colonel made excuses for his warmth on the score of his affection to his cousin.

My regard for her made me readily admit them; and so a fresh bottle of Burgundy and another of champagne being put upon the table, we sat down in good humour, after all this blustering, in order to enter closer into the particulars of the case, which I undertook, at both their desires, to do.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

August 30th.

It was lucky our servants met and exchanged letters. As soon as I had run through yours, I took coach to Smith's, although I had been come from thence but about an hour, and had taken leave of the lady for the night.

I sent down for Mrs. Lovick, and desired her, in the first place, to acquaint the lady (who was busy in her closet) that I had letters from Berks, in which I was informed that the interview between Colonel Morden and Mr. Lovelace had ended without ill consequences; that the colonel intended to write to her very soon, and was interesting himself meanwhile in her favour with her relations; that I hoped that this agreeable news would be a means of giving her good rest; and I would wait upon her in the morning, by the time she should return from prayers, with all the particulars.

She sent me word that she should be glad to see me in the morning, and was highly obliged to me for the good news I had sent her up.

Thursday, 11 o'clock, August 31st.

I AM just come from the lady, whom I left cheerful and serene.

She thanked me for my communication of the preceding night.

She was far from rejoicing, as I had done, at the disappointment her letter gave you when explained.

She said she meant only an innocent allegory, which might carry instruction and warning to you, when the meaning was taken, as well as answer her own hopes for the time. It

was run off in a hurry. She was afraid it was not quite right in *her*, but hoped the end would excuse (if it could not justify) the means. And then she again expressed a good deal of apprehension lest you should still take it into your head to molest her, when her time, she said, was so short, that she wanted every moment of it.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Thursday, 3 o'clock, August 31st.

ON my revisit to the lady, I found her almost as much a sufferer from joy as she had sometimes been from grief; for she had just received a very kind letter from her cousin Morden, which she was so good as to communicate to me. As she had already begun to answer it, I begged leave to attend her in the evening, that I might not interrupt her in it.

The letter is a very tender one.

[Here Mr. Belford gives the substance of it upon his memory: After excusing himself for not waiting on his "dearest cousin" before, having been a fortnight in England, but "busying himself all the time in her service," Colonel Morden would have Clarissa entertain Lovelace's renewed proposals through him of marriage. He mentions his visit to Lord M., and assures her of Lovelace's desire to make all the reparation in his power.]

(Miss Clarissa Harlowe to William Morden, Esq.)

Thursday, August 31st.

I most heartily congratulate you, dear sir, on your return to your native country.

I heard with much pleasure that you were come, but I was both afraid and ashamed, till you encouraged me by a first notice, to address myself to you.

How consoling is it to my wounded heart to find that you have not been carried away by that tide of resentment and displeasure with which I have been so unhappily overwhelmed, but that, while my still nearer relations have not thought fit to examine into the truth of vile reports raised against me, you have informed yourself of my innocence, and generously *credited* the information.

I have not the least reason to doubt Mr. Lovelace's sincerity in his offers of marriage, nor that all his relations are heartily desirous of ranking me among them. I have had noble instances of their esteem for me on their apprehending that my father's displeasure must have subjected me to difficulties; and this after I had absolutely refused *their* pressing solicitations in their kinsman's favour as well as *his own*.

Nor think me, my dear cousin, blameable for refusing him. I had given Mr. Lovelace no reason to think me a weak creature. If I *had*, a man of his {character might have thought himself warranted to endeavour to make ungenerous advantage of the weakness he had been able to inspire. The consciousness of *my own* weakness (in that case) might have brought me to a composition with *his* wickedness.

I can indeed forgive him. But that is because I think his crimes have set me above him. Can I be above the man, sir, to whom I shall give my hand and my vows, and with them a sanction to the most premeditated baseness? No, sir. Let me say that your cousin Clarissa, were she likely to live many years, and *that* (if she married not this man) in penury or want, despised and forsaken by all her friends, puts not so high a value upon the conveniences of life, nor upon life itself, as to seek to re-obtain the one or to preserve the other, by giving *such* a sanction—a sanction which, *were she to perform her duty*, would reward the violator.

Nor is it so much from pride as from principle that I say this. What, sir! when virtue, when chastity is the crown of a woman, and particularly of a wife, shall your cousin stoop to marry this man when he has found himself mistaken in the vile opinion he had conceived of her? Hitherto he has not had reason to think me weak. Nor will I give him an instance so flagrant, that weak I am in a point in which it would be criminal to be *found* weak.

One day, sir, you will perhaps know all my story, but whenever it is known, I beg that the author of my calamities may not be vindictively sought after. He could not have been the author of them but for a strange concurrence of unhappy causes. As the law will not be able to reach him when I am gone, the apprehension of any other sort of vengeance terrifies me, since in such a case, should my friends be *safe*, what honour would his death bring to my memory? If any of them should come to misfortune, how would my fault be aggravated!

God long preserve you, my dearest cousin, and bless you but in *proportion* to the consolation you have given me in letting me know that you still love me, and that I have one near and dear relation who can pity and forgive me (and then will you be *greatly* blessed), is the prayer of

Your ever grateful and affectionate

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Thursday, August 31st.

I CANNOT but own that I am cut to the heart by *this* Miss Harlowe's interpretation of her letter. She ought never to be forgiven. *She*, a meek person, and a penitent, and innocent, and pious, and I know not what, who can deceive with a foot in the grave.

'Tis evident that she sat down to write this letter with a design to mislead and deceive. And if she be capable of that at such a crisis she has as much need of *Heaven's* forgiveness as I have of *hers*, and with all her cant of *charity*, if she be not more sure of it than I am of her *real pardon*, and if she take the thing in the light she ought to take it in, she will have a few darker moments yet to come than she seems to expect.

Lord M. himself, who is not one of those (to speak in his own phrase) *who can penetrate a millstone*, sees the deceit, and thinks it unworthy of her, though my cousins Montague vindicate her. And no wonder, this cursed partial sex (I hate 'em all—by my soul, I hate 'em all) will never allow anything against an individual of it, where ours is concerned. And why? Because if they censure deceit in another they must condemn their own hearts.

She is to send me a letter after she is in heaven, is she? The devil take such *allegories*; and the devil take thee for calling this absurdity an *innocent artifice*.

I insist upon it that if a woman of her character, at such a critical time, is to be justified in such a deception, a man in full vigour, as I am, may be excused for all his stratagems against her. And, thank my stars, I can now sit me down with a quiet conscience on that score. By my soul I can, Jack. Nor has anybody who can acquit *her* a right to blame *me*. But with some, indeed, everything *she* does must be good, everything *I* do must be bad. And why?—Because she has always taken care to coax the stupid misjudging world like a *woman*, while I have constantly defied and despised its censures like a *man*.

But, notwithstanding all, you may let her know from me that I will *not* molest her, since my visits would be so shocking to her. And I hope she will take this into her consideration as a piece of generosity which she could hardly expect after the deception she has put upon me. And let her further know that if there be anything in my power that will contribute either to her ease or honour, I will obey her

at the very first intimation, however disgraceful or detrimental to myself. All this, to make her unapprehensive, and that she may have nothing to pull her back.

If her cursed relations could be brought as cheerfully to perform *their* parts, I'd answer life for life for her recovery.

But who that has so many ludicrous images raised in his mind by thy awkward penitence can forbear laughing at thee? Spare, I beseech thee, dear Belford, for the future, all thine own aspirations, if thou wouldst not dishonour those of an angel indeed.

When I came to that passage where thou sayst that thou considerest her as one sent from Heaven to draw thee after her, for the heart of me I could not for an hour put thee out of my head, in the attitude of Dame Elizabeth Carteret, on her monument in Westminster Abbey. If thou never observedst it, go thither on purpose, and there wilt thou see this dame in effigy, with uplifted head and hand, the latter taken hold of by a Cupid every inch of stone, one clumsy foot lifted up also, aiming, as the sculptor designed it, to ascend; the other riveted to its native earth, bemired like thee (*immersed* thou wouldst call it), beyond the possibility of moving itself. Both figures, thou wilt find, seem to be in a contention: the bigger whether it should pull down the lesser about its ears; the lesser—a chubby, fat little varlet, with wings not much larger than those of a butterfly—whether it would raise the larger to a Heaven it points to, hardly big enough to contain the toes of either.

Thou wilt say, perhaps, that the dame's figure in *stone* may do credit in comparison to thine, *wooden* as thou art all over, but that the lady, who, in everything but in the trick she has played me so lately, is truly an angel, is but sorrowfully represented by the fat-flanked Cupid. This I allow thee. But yet there is enough in thy aspirations to strike my mind with a resemblance of thee and the lady to the figures on the wretched monument; for thou oughtest to remember that, prepared as she may be to mount to her native skies, it is impossible for her to draw after her a heavy fellow who has so much to repent of as thou hast.

But now, to be serious once more, let me tell you, Belford, that if the lady be really so ill as you write she is, it will become you (*no Roman style here*), in a case so very affecting, to be a little less pointed and sarcastic in your reflections. For, upon my soul, the matter begins to grate me most confoundingly.

I am now so impatient to hear oftener of her, that I take

the hint accidentally given me by our two fellows meeting at Slough, and resolve to go to our friend Doleman's at Uxbridge, whose wife and sister, as well as he, have so frequently pressed me to give them my company for a week or two. There shall I be within two hours' ride if anything should happen to induce her to see me ; for it will well become her piety and avowed charity, should the worst happen—the Lord of Heaven and earth, however, avert that worst—to give me that pardon from her *lips* which she has not denied me by *pen and ink* ; and as she wishes my reformation, she knows not what good effects such an interview may have upon me.

I shall accordingly be at Doleman's to-morrow morning by eleven at furthest. My fellow will find me there at his return from you with a letter, I hope. I shall have Joel with me likewise, that I may send the oftener, as matters fall out. Were I to be still nearer, or in town, it would be impossible to withhold myself from seeing her.

But if the worst happen, as, by your continual knelling, I know not what to think of it—yet, once more, Heaven avert that worst—how natural is it to pray, when one cannot help oneself ! Then say not in so many dreadful words what the event is, only that you advise me to take a trip to Paris, and that will stab me to the heart.

* * * *

I so well approve of your goodness to poor Belton's sister, that I have made Mowbray give up his legacy, as I do mine, towards her India Bonds. When I come to town, Tourville shall do the like ; and we will buy each a ring to wear in memory of the honest fellow with our own money, that we may perform *his* will as well as our *own*.

My fellow rides the rest of the night. I charge you, Jack, if you would save his life, that you send him not back empty-handed.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Thursday night, August 31st.

WHEN I concluded my last, I hoped that my next attendance upon this *surprising* lady would furnish me with some particulars as agreeable as now could be hoped for from the declining way she is in, by reason of the welcome letter she had received from her cousin Morden. But it proved quite otherwise to *me*, though not to *herself*, for I think I never

was more shocked in my life than on the occasion I shall mention presently.

When I attended her about seven in the evening, she told me that she found herself in a very petulant way, after I had left her.

"Strange," said she, "that the pleasure I received from my cousin's letter should have such an effect upon me. But I could not help giving way to a *comparative* humour, as I may call it, and to think it very hard, that my nearer relations did not take the methods which my cousin Morden kindly took, by inquiring into my merit or demerit, and giving my cause a fair audit before they proceeded to condemnation."

She had hardly said this, when she started, and a blush overspread her sweet face on hearing, as I also did, a sort of lumbering noise upon the stairs, as if a large trunk were bringing up between two people, and looking upon me with an eye of concern, "Blunderers!" said she, "they have brought in *something* two hours before the time. Don't be surprised, sir, it is all to save *you* trouble."

Before I could speak, in came Mrs. Smith.

"O, madam," said she, "what have you done?"

Mrs. Lovick, entering, made the same exclamation.

"Lord have mercy upon me, madam," cried I, "what have you done?" for, she stepping at the instant to the door, the women told me it was a coffin. O Lovelace! that thou hadst been there at the moment! Thou, the causer of all these shocking scenes! surely thou couldst not have been less affected than I, who have no guilt, as to *her*, to answer for.

With an intrepidity of a piece with the preparation, having directed them to carry it into her bed-chamber, she returned to us. "They were not to have brought it in till after dark," said she. "Pray excuse me, Mr. Belford; and don't you, Mrs. Lovick, be concerned; nor you, Mrs. Smith. Why should you? There is nothing more in it than the unusualness of the thing. Why may we not be as reasonably shocked at going to the church where are the monuments of our ancestors, with whose dust we even *hope* our dust shall be one day mingled, as to be moved at such a sight as this."

We all remained silent, the women having their aprons at their eyes. "Why this concern for nothing at all!" said she; "if I am to be blamed for anything, it is for showing too much solicitude, as it may be thought, for this earthly

part. I love to do everything for myself that I can do. I ever did. Every other material point is so far done, and taken care of, that I have had *leisure* for things of lesser moment. Minutenesses may be observed where greater articles are not neglected for them. I might have had this to order, perhaps, when less fit to order it. I have no mother, no sister, no Mrs. Norton, no Miss Howe near me. Some of you must have seen *this* in a few days, if not now; perhaps have had the friendly trouble of directing it. And what is the difference of a few days to *you*, when *I* am gratified, rather than discomposed by it? I shall not die the sooner for such a preparation. Should not everybody that has anything to bequeath make their will? And who, that makes a will, should be afraid of a coffin? My dear friends," to the women, "I have considered these things; do not, with such an object before you as you have had in *me* for weeks, give me reason to think you have not."

How reasonable was all this! It showed, indeed, that she herself had well considered it. But yet we could not help being shocked at the thoughts of the coffin thus brought in; the lovely person before our eyes who is in all likelihood so soon to fill it.

We were all silent still, the women in grief, I in a manner stunned. She would not ask *me*, she said; but would be glad, since it had thus earlier than she had intended been brought in, that her two good friends would walk in and look upon it. They would be less shocked when it was made more familiar to their eyes. "Don't you lead back, said she, a starting steed to the object he is apt to start at, in order to familiarize him to it, and cure his starting? The same reason will hold in this case. Come, my good friends, I will lead you in."

I took my leave, telling her she had done wrong, very wrong; and ought not, by any means, to have such an object before her.

The women followed her in. 'Tis a strange sex! Nothing is too shocking for them to look upon, or see acted, that has but novelty and curiosity in it.

Down I posted, got a chair, and was carried home extremely shocked and discomposed; yet weighing the lady's arguments, I know not why I was so affected—except, as she said, at the unusualness of the thing.

While I waited for a chair, Mrs. Smith came down and told me that there were devices and inscriptions upon the lid. Lord bless me! is a coffin a proper subject to display

fancy upon? But these great minds cannot avoid doing extraordinary things!

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Friday morning, September 1st.

It is surprising that I, a *man*, should be so much affected as I was, at such an object as is the subject of my former letter; who also, in my late uncle's case, and poor Belton's, had the like before me, and the directing of it: when she, a *woman* of so weak and tender a frame, who was to fill it—so soon perhaps to fill it—could give orders about it, and draw out the devices upon it, and explain them with so little concern as the women tell me she did to them last night after I was gone.

I really was ill and restless all night. Thou wert the subject of my execration, and she of my admiration, all the time I was quite awake. And when I dozed I dreamt of nothing but of flying hour-glasses, death's-heads, spades, mattocks, and eternity; the hint of her devices (as given me by Mrs. Smith) running in my head.

However, not being able to keep away from Smith's, I went thither about seven. The lady was just gone out. She had slept better, I found, than I, though her solemn repository was under her window, not far from her bedside.

I was prevailed upon by Mrs. Smith, and her nurse Shelburne, Mrs. Lovick being abroad with her, to go up and look at the devices. Mrs. Lovick has since shown me a copy of the draught by which all was ordered. And I will give thee a sketch of the symbols.

The principal device, neatly etched on a plate of white metal, is a crowned serpent, with its tail in its mouth, forming a ring, the emblem of eternity: and in the circle made by it is this inscription:—

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

APRIL X.

[*Then the year.*]

ÆTAT. XIX.

For ornaments—At top, an hourglass winged. At bottom, an urn.

Under the hourglass, on another plate, this inscription:—

“Here the wicked cease from troubling: And here the weary be at rest.”—*Job* iii. 17.

Over the urn, near the bottom:—

“Turn again unto thy rest, O my soul! For the Lord hath rewarded thee: And why? Thou hast delivered my soul from death; mine eyes from tears; and my feet from falling.”—*Psalms* ciii. 7, 8.

Over this text is the head of a white lily snapped short off, and just falling from the stalk; and this inscription over that, between the principal plate and the lily:—

“The days of man are but as grass. For he flourisheth as a flower of the field: For, as soon as the wind goeth over it, it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.—*Psalms* ciii. 15, 16.

She excused herself to the women, on the score of her youth, and being used to draw for her needleworks, for having shown more fancy than would perhaps be thought suitable on so solemn an occasion.

The date, April 10th, she accounted for, as not being able to tell what her *closing-day* would be; and as that was the fatal day of her leaving her father's house.

She discharged the undertaker's bill after I went away, with as much cheerfulness as she could ever have paid for the clothes she sold, to purchase this her *palace*: for such she called it; reflecting upon herself for the expensiveness of it, saying, that they might observe in *her*, that pride left not poor mortals to the last. But indeed she did not know but her father would permit it, when furnished, to be carried down to be deposited with her ancestors; and, in that case, she ought not to discredit those ancestors in her appearance amongst them.

It is covered with fine black cloth, and lined with white satin—soon, she said, to be tarnished by viler earth than any it could be covered by.

The burial-dress was brought home with it. The women had curiosity enough, I suppose, to see her open that, if she did open it. And perhaps thou wouldst have been glad to have been present, to have admired it too.

Mrs. Lovick said, she took the liberty to blame her; and wished the removal of such an object—from her *bed-chamber*, at least. And was so affected with the noble answer she made upon it, that she entered it down the moment she left her.

“To persons in health,” said she, “this sight may be shocking, and the preparation, and my unconcernedness in it, may appear affected; but to me, who have had so gradual a

weaning-time from the world, and so much reason not to love it, I must say I dwell on, I indulge, and, strictly speaking, I enjoy, the thoughts of death. For, believe me"—looking steadfastly at the awful receptacle—"believe what at this instant I feel to be most true, that there is such a vast superiority of weight and importance in the thought of death, and its hoped for happy consequences, that it in a manner annihilates all other considerations and concerns. Believe me, my good friends, it does what nothing else can do. It teaches me, by strengthening in me the force of the divinest example, to forgive the injuries I have received, and shuts out the remembrance of past evils from my soul."

And now let me ask thee, Lovelace, dost thou think that when the time shall come that thou shalt be obliged to launch into the boundless ocean of eternity, thou wilt be able any more than poor Belton, to act thy part with such true heroism, as this sweet and tender blossom of a woman has manifested, and continues to manifest?

O no! it cannot be. And why cannot it be? The reason is evident. She has no *wilful* errors to look back upon with self-reproach—and her mind is strengthened by the consolations which flow from that *religious rectitude* which has been the guide of all her actions, and which has taught her rather to choose to be a sufferer than an aggressor.

This was the support of the divine Socrates, as thou hast read. When led to execution, his wife lamenting that he should suffer, being innocent, "Thou fool," said he, "wouldst thou wish me to be guilty?"

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Friday, September 1st.

How astonishing, in the midst of such affecting scenes, is thy mirth on what thou callest my *own aspirations*. Never, surely, was there such another man in this world, thy talents and thy levity taken together. Surely, what I shall send thee with this will affect thee. If not, nothing can, till thy own hour come. And heavy will then thy reflections be!

I am glad, however, that thou enablest me to assure the lady that thou wilt no more molest her; that is to say, in other words, that, after having ruined her fortunes, and all her worldly prospects, thou wilt be so gracious as to let her lie down and die in peace.

Thy giving up to poor Belton's sister the little legacy, and thy undertaking to make Mowbray and Tourville follow thy

example, are, I must say, to thy honour, of a piece with thy generosity to thy Rosebud and her Johnny ; and to a number of other good actions, in pecuniary matters ; although thy Rosebud is, I believe, the only instance where a pretty woman was concerned, of such a disinterested bounty.

Upon my faith, Lovelace, I love to praise thee ; and often and often, as thou knowest, have I *studied* for occasions to do it, insomuch that, when for the life of me I could not think of anything done by thee that deserved praise, I have taken pains to applaud the not ungraceful manner in which thou hast performed actions that merited the gallows.

Now thou art so near, I will dispatch *my* servant to thee, if occasion requires. But I fear I shall soon give thee the news thou apprehendest, for I am just now sent for by Mrs. Smith, who has ordered the messenger to tell me that she knew not if the lady will be alive when I come.

Friday, September 1st, 2 o'clock, at Smith's.

I COULD not close my letter in such an uncertainty as must have added to your impatience. For you have, on several occasions, convinced me that the suspense you love to *give*, would be the greatest torment to you that you could *receive* ; a common case with all aggressive and violent spirits, I believe. I will just mention then (your servant waiting here till I have written) that the lady has had two very severe fits, in the last of which, whilst she lay, they sent to the doctor and Mr. Goddard, who both advised that a messenger should be dispatched for me, as her executor, being doubtful whether, if she had a third, it would not carry her off.

She was tolerably recovered by the time I came ; and the doctor made her promise before me, that while she was so weak, she would not attempt any more to go abroad ; for, by Mrs. Lovick's description, who attended her, the shortness of her breath, her extreme weakness, and the fervour of her devotions when at church, were contraries, which, pulling different ways (the soul aspiring, the body sinking), tore her tender frame in pieces.

So much for the present. I shall detain Will no longer, than just to beg that you will send me back this packet, and the last. Your memory is so good, that once reading is all you ever give, or need to give, to anything. And who but ourselves can make out ^{our} characters, were you inclined to let anybody see what passes between us ? If I cannot be

obliged, I shall be tempted to withhold what I write, till I have time to take a copy of it.*

A letter from Miss Howe is just now brought by a particular messenger, who says he must carry back a few lines in return. But, as the lady is just retired to lie down, the man is to call again by-and-by.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Uxbridge, *September 1st, 12 o'clock at night.*

I SEND you the papers with this. You must account to me honestly and fairly when I see you for the earnestness with which you write for them. And then also will we talk about the contents of your last dispatch, and about some of your severe and unfriendly reflections.

Meantime, whatever thou dost, don't let the wonderful creature leave us ! Set before her the sin of her preparation, as if she thought she could depart when she pleased. She'll persuade herself, at this rate, that she has nothing to do, when all is ready, but to lie down, and go to sleep ; and such a lively fancy as hers will make a reality of a jest at any time.

A *jest* I call all that has passed between her and me ; a mere jest to die for, for has not her triumph over me, from first to last, been infinitely greater than her sufferings from me ?

Would the sacred regard I have for her purity, even for her *personal* as well as *intellectual* purity, permit, I could prove this as clear as the sun. Tell, therefore, the dear creature that she must not be wicked in her piety. There is a *too much* as well as a *too little* even in her righteousness. Perhaps she does not think of that. O that she would have permitted my attendance as obligingly as she does of thine ! The dear soul used to love humour. I remember the time that she knew how to smile at a piece of *apropos* humour. And, let me tell thee, a smile upon the lips, or a sparkling in the eye, must have had its correspondent cheerfulness in a heart so sincere as hers.

Tell the doctor I will make over all my possessions and all my reversions to him, if he will but prolong her life for one twelvemonth to come. But for one twelvemonth,

* It may not be amiss to observe that Mr. Belford's solicitude to get back his letters was owing to his desire of fulfilling the lady's wishes, that he would furnish Miss Howe with materials to vindicate her memory.

Jack. He will lose all his reputation with me, and I shall treat him as Belton did his doctor if he cannot do this for me, on so young a subject. But *nineteen*, Belford ; *nineteen* cannot so soon die of grief, if the doctor deserve that name, and so blooming and so fine a constitution as she had but three or four months ago.

But what need the doctor to ask her leave to write to her friends ? Could he not have done it without letting her know anything of the matter ? That was one of the likeliest means that could be thought of to bring some of them about her, since she is so desirous to see them. At least, it would have induced them to send up her favourite Norton.

How the dear creature's character rises in every line of thy letters. But it is owing to the uncommon occasions she has met with that she blazes out upon us with such a meridian lustre. How, but for those occasions, could her noble sentiments, her forgiving spirit, her exalted benevolence, and her equanimity in view of the most shocking prospects, which set her in a light so superior to all her sex, have been manifested ?

I know thou wilt think I am going to claim some merit to myself for having given her such opportunities of signaling her virtues. But I am not ; for if I did I must share that merit with her implacable relations, and my soul disdains a partnership in anything with such a family.

Hence it is that I admire her more than ever, and that my love for her is less *personal*, as I may say, more *intellectual*, than ever I thought it could be to woman.

Hence, also, I am confident (would it please the fates to spare her, and make her mine) I could love her with a purity that would draw on *my own* future, as well as ensure *her* temporal happiness. And hence, by necessary consequence, shall I be the most miserable of all men if I am deprived of her.

Thou severely reflectest upon me for my levity : the abbey instance in thine eye, I suppose. And I will be ingenuous enough to own that, as thou seest not my heart, there may be passages in every one of my letters which (the melancholy occasion considered) deserve thy most pointed rebukes. But, faith, Jack, thou art such a tragi-comical mortal, with thy leaden aspirations at one time, and thy flying hour-glasses and dreaming terrors at another, that it is impossible to keep within the bounds of decorum and gravity when one reads what thou writest.

But to restrain myself, for my constitutional gaiety was

ready to run away with me again, I will repeat that I am most egregiously affected with the circumstances of the case; and, were this paragon actually to quit the world, should never enjoy myself one hour together, though I were to live to the age of Methusalem.

Indeed, it is to this *deep concern* that my *levity* is owing; for I struggle, and struggle, and try to buffet down my reflections as they rise; and when I cannot, I am forced, as I have often said, to try to make myself laugh, that I may not cry, for one or other I must do. And is it not philosophy carried to the highest pitch for a man to conquer such tumults of soul as I am sometimes agitated by, and, in the very height of the storm, to be able to quaver out a laugh?

There is something owing to constitution I own, and that this is the laughing-time of my life; for what a woe must that be which, for an hour together, can mortify a man of six or seven-and-twenty, in high blood and spirits, of a naturally gay disposition, who can sing, dance, and scribble, and take and give delight in them all? But then my grief, as my joy, is sharper-pointed than most other men's.

* * * *

O, Jack! how my conscience, that gives edge even to thy blunt reflections, tears me! Even this moment would I give the world to push the cruel reproacher from me by one ray of my usual gaiety! Sick of myself! sick of the remembrance of my vile plots! Villainous burglar, felon, thief, that I was! all which has brought upon me such *durable* and such *heavy* remorse! what would I give that I had not been guilty of such barbarous and ungrateful perfidy to the most excellent of God's creatures!

I would end, methinks, with one sprightlier line; but it will not be. Let me tell thee, then, and rejoice at it if thou wilt, that I am

Inexpressibly miserable,

R. L.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Saturday morning, September 2nd.

I HAVE some little pleasure given me by thine just now brought me. I see now that thou hast a little humanity left. Would to heaven, for the dear lady's sake as well as for thy own, that thou hadst rummaged it up from all the dark forgotten corners of thy soul a little sooner!

The lady is alive, and has all her noble intellects clear and strong; but *nineteen* will not, however, save her. She says

she will now content herself with her closet duties and the visits of the parish minister, and will not attempt to go out. Nor, indeed, will she, I am afraid, ever walk up or down a pair of stairs again.

I am sorry to have this to say; but it would be a folly to flatter thee.

As to thy seeing her, I believe the least hint of that sort now would cut off some hours of her life.

What has contributed to her serenity, it seems, is that, taking the alarm her fits gave her, she has entirely finished, and signed and sealed, her last will, which she had deferred doing till this time, in hopes, as she said, of some good news from Harlowe Place, which would have induced her to alter some passages in it.

Miss Howe's letter was not given her till four in the afternoon yesterday; at what time the messenger returned for an answer. She admitted him, ill as she then was; and she would have written a few lines to Miss Howe, but not being able to hold a pen, she bid the messenger tell her that she hoped to be well enough to write by the next day's post.

Saturday, 6 in the afternoon.

I CALLED just now, and found the lady writing to Miss Howe. She made me a melancholy compliment, that she showed me not Miss Howe's letter because I should soon have that and all her papers before me.

She added that her cousin Morden was warmly engaged in her favour with her friends. And one good piece of news Miss Howe's letter contained: that her father would give up some matters which, appertaining to her of right, would make my executorship the easier in some particulars that had given her a little pain.

She owned she had been obliged to leave off in the letter she was writing through weakness.

Will says he shall reach you to-night. And if I find her not worse I will ride to Edgeware, and return in the afternoon.

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

Tuesday, August 29th.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

WE are at length returned home. I had intended to wait on you in London: but my mother is very ill—alas! very ill indeed. And you are likewise very ill, I see *that* by

yours of the 25th. What shall I do if I lose two such dear and tender friends? She was taken ill yesterday on our return home, and has a violent fever, and the doctors are doubtful about her.

If she should die, how will all my pertnesses to her fly in my face! Why, why, did I ever vex her? She says I have been all duty and obedience. She kindly forgets all my faults, and remembers everything I have been so happy as to oblige her in. This cuts me to the heart.

I see, my dear, you are very bad, and I cannot bear it. Do, if you can be better, do, for *my* sake, *be* better, and send me word of it. Be sure you send me a line. If I lose you, my more than sister, and lose my mother, I shall distrust my own conduct, and will not marry. And why should I? Creeping, cringing in courtship, O, my dear, these men are a vile race of *reptiles* in *our day*, and mere *bears* in *their own*. See in Lovelace all that is desirable in figure, in birth, and in fortune, but in his heart a devil. See in Hickman—indeed, my dear, I cannot tell what anybody can see in Hickman, to be always preaching in his favour—and is it to be expected that I, who could hardly bear control from a mother, should take it from a husband; from one, too, who has neither more wit, nor more understanding, than myself?

Wednesday, August 30th.

MY mother—Heaven be praised—has had a fine night, and is much better. Her fever has yielded to medicine. And now I can write once more with freedom and ease to you, in hopes that *you* also are better. If this be granted to my prayers, I shall again be happy. I write with still the more alacrity, as I have an opportunity given me to touch upon a subject in which you are nearly concerned.

You must know then, my dear, that your cousin Morden has been here with me. He told me of an interview he had on Monday, at Lord M.'s, with Lovelace, and asked me abundance of questions about you, and about that villainous man.

I could have raised a fine flame between them if I would; but observing that he is a man of lively passions, and believing you would be miserable if anything should happen to him from a quarrel with a man who is known to have so many advantages at his sword, I made not the worst of the subjects we talked of. But, as I could not tell

untruths in his favour, you must think I said enough to make him curse the wretch.

I don't find—well as they all used to respect Colonel Morden—that he has influence enough upon them to bring them to any terms of reconciliation.

The Colonel is exceedingly out of humour with them all. Yet has he not hitherto, it seems, seen your brutal brother. I told him how ill you were, and communicated to him some of the contents of your letter. He admired *you*, cursed *Lovelace*, and raved against all your *family*. He declared that they were all unworthy of you.

At his request I permitted him to take some brief notes of such of the contents of your letter to me as I thought I *could* read to him; and, particularly, of your melancholy conclusion.

He says that none of your friends think you so ill as you are; nor will believe it.

If they do, their present hardness of heart will be the subject of everlasting remorse to them should you be taken from us. But now it seems, barbarous wretches! you are to *suffer within an inch of your life*.

He asked me questions about Mr. Belford; and when he had heard what I had to say of that gentleman, and his disinterested services to you, he raved at some villainous surmises thrown out against you.

* * * *

He was so uneasy about you himself, that on Thursday, the 24th, he sent up an honest serious man, one Alston, a gentleman farmer, to inquire of your condition, your visitors, and the like; who brought him word that you were very ill, and were put to great straits to support yourself. But as this was told him by the gentlewoman of the house where you lodge, who it seems mingled with it some tart, though deserved, reflections upon your relations' cruelty, it was not credited by them. And I myself hope it cannot be true, for surely you could not be so *unjust*, I will say to my friendship, as to suffer any inconveniences for want of money. I think I could not forgive you if it were so.

The Colonel (as one of your trustees) is resolved to see you put into possession of your estate; and, in the mean time, he has actually engaged them to remit to him for you the produce of it, accrued since your grandfather's death—a very considerable sum, and proposes himself to attend you with it. But, by a hint he dropped, I find you had disappointed some people's littleness, by not writing to them

for money and supplies ; since they were determined to distress you and to put you at defiance.

Your cousin imagines that before a reconciliation takes place, they will insist that you shall make such a will as to that estate as they shall approve of ; but he declares he will not go out of England till he has seen justice done you by *everybody* ; and that you shall not be imposed upon either by friend or foe.

By *relation* or foe should he not have said ? For a friend will not impose upon a friend.

Had this villain Lovelace consulted his worldly interest *only*, what a fortune would he have had in you.

I am obliged to leave off here. I need not say how much I am and will ever be

Your affectionate, &c.,

ANNA HOWE.

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

Thursday, August 31st.

THE Colonel thought fit once, in praise of Lovelace's *generosity*, to say that, *as a man of honour ought*, he took to himself all the blame, and acquitted you of the consequences of the precipitate step you had taken ; since, he said, as you loved him and were in his power, he *must* have had advantages which he would *not* have had if you had continued at your father's or at any friend's.

"*Mighty generous*," I said, "to pretend to *clear* reputations which never would have been *sullied* but by falling into such dirty acquaintance." But in this case, I averred that there was no need of anything but the strictest truth to demonstrate Lovelace to be the blackest of villains, you the brightest of innocents.

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Truly, if I would have heard him on the subject, he would have gone further into the crime upon which they wanted to have Lovelace arraigned. Yet this is a man improved by travel and learning. Upon my word, my dear, I, who have been accustomed to the most delicate conversation ever since I had the honour to know you, despise this sex, from the gentleman down to the peasant.

Upon the whole I find that Mr. Morden has a very slender notion of women's virtue in particular cases, for which reason I put him down, though your favourite, as one who is not entitled to cast the *first stone*.

I never knew a man who deserved to be well thought of himself for his morals, who had a slight opinion of the virtue of our sex in general. For if, from the *difference* of *temperament* and *education*, modesty, chastity, and piety too, are not to be found in our sex preferably to the other, I should think it a sign of a much worse nature in *ours*.

These sort of reflections are enough to make a woman who has at heart her own honour and the honour of her sex to look about her and consider what she is doing when she enters into an intimacy with these wretches, since it is plain that whenever she throws herself into the power of a man, and leaves for him her parents or guardians, everybody will believe her escape from evil to be owing more to her good luck than to her discretion. And let the man be ever such a villain, she must take into her own bosom a share of his guilty baseness.

Every man, they will say, is not a LOVELACE. True : but then, neither is every woman a CLARISSA. And allow for the one and for the other, the example must be of general use.

I prepared Mr. Morden to expect your appointment of Mr. Belford for an office that we both hope he will have no occasion to act in, nor anybody else, for many, very many years to come. He was at first startled at it; but, upon hearing such of your reasons as had satisfied me, he only said, that such an appointment, were it to take place, would exceedingly affect his other cousins.

He told me, he had a copy of Lovelace's letter to you, imploring your pardon, and offering to undergo any penance to procure it; and also of your answer to it.

I would have written much more, on the following particulars especially; to wit, of the wretched man's hunting you out of your lodgings; of your relations' strange *implacableness*—I am in haste, and cannot think of a word you would like better, *just now*: of your last letter to Lovelace, to divert him from pursuing you; of your aunt Hervey's penitential conversation with Mrs. Norton; of Mr. Wyerley's renewed address; and of twenty other things; but am obliged to leave off to attend my cousins, who are come to visit us on account of my mother's illness; I will therefore dispatch these by Roger; and if my mother gets well soon, I am resolved to see you in town, and tell you everything that is on my mind.

Your affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

I cannot express how much your staggering lines, and your conclusion, affect me !

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Sunday, September 3rd.

I ATTENDED the lady this morning, before I set out for Edgeware. She was so ill over-night, that she was obliged to leave unfinished her letter to Miss Howe. But early this morning she made an end of it. She was so fatigued with writing, that she told me she would lie down after I was gone.

They sent for Mr. Goddard, last night ; and not being able to see him out of her own chamber, he, for the first time, saw her *house*, as she calls it. He was extremely shocked at it ; and chid Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Lovick for not persuading her to have such an object removed from her bedchamber. And when they excused themselves on the *little authority* it was reasonable to suppose they must have with a lady so much their superior, he reflected on those who had *more* authority, and who left her to proceed with such a shocking and solemn whimsy, as he called it.

It is placed near the window, like a harpsichord, though covered over to the ground. And when she is so ill, that she cannot well go to her closet, she writes and reads upon it, as others would upon a desk or table. But, only as she was so ill last night, she chooses not to see anybody in that apartment.

I went to Edgeware ; and, returning in the evening, attended her again. She had a letter brought her from Mrs. Norton just before I came. But she had not opened it ; and said, that as she was pretty calm and composed, she was afraid to look into the contents, lest she should be ruffled ; expecting, now, to hear of nothing that could do her good or give her pleasure from that good woman's *dear hard-hearted neighbours*, as she called her own relations.

Seeing her so weak and ill, I withdrew ; nor did she desire me to tarry, as sometimes she does.

I had some hints, as I went away, from Mrs. Smith, that she had appropriated that evening to some offices, that were to save trouble, as she called it, after her departure, and had been giving orders to her nurse, and to Mrs. Lovick, and Mrs. Smith, about what she would have done when she *was gone* ; and I believe they were of a very delicate and affecting nature ; but Mrs. Smith descended not to particulars.

The doctor had been with her, as well as Mr. Goddard ;

and they both joined with great earnestness to persuade her to have her *house* removed out of her sight; but she assured them that it gave her pleasure and spirits; and, being a necessary preparation, she wondered they should be surprised at it, when she had not any of her family about her, or any old acquaintance, on whose care and exactness she could rely.

The doctor told Mrs. Smith that he believed she would hold out long enough for any of her friends to have notice of her state, and to see her, and hardly longer; and since he could not find that she had any certainty of seeing her cousin Morden (which made it plain that her relations continued inflexible), he would go home, and write a letter to her father, take it as she would.

She had spent great part of the day in intense devotions; and to-morrow morning she is to have with her the same clergyman who has often attended her; from whose hands she will again receive the Sacrament.

Thou seest, Lovelace, that all is preparing, and I am to attend her to-morrow afternoon, to take some instructions in relation to my part in the office to be performed for her.

I shall dispatch Harry to-morrow morning early with her letter to Miss Howe: an offer she took very kindly, as she is extremely solicitous to lessen that young lady's apprehensions for her on not hearing from her by Saturday's post. And yet, if she write truth, as no doubt but she will, how can her apprehensions be lessened?

(Clarissa to Miss Howe.)

Saturday, September 2nd.

I WRITE, my beloved Miss Howe, though very ill still; but I could not by the return of your messenger, for I was then unable to hold a pen.

Your mother's illness, as mentioned in your letter, gave me great distress for you till I read further. You bewailed it as it became a daughter so sensible. May you be blessed in each other for many, very many, happy years to come! I doubt not that even this sudden and grievous indisposition, by the frame it has put you in, and the apprehension it has given you of losing so dear a mother, will contribute to the happiness I wish you; for, alas! my dear, we seldom know how to value the blessings we enjoy till we are in danger of losing them, or have actually lost them; and then, what would we give to have them restored to us?

What, I wonder, has again happened between you and Mr. Hickman? Although I know it not, I dare say it is owing to some petty petulance—to some half-ungenerous advantage taken of his obligingness and assiduity. Will you never, my dear, give the weight you and all our sex ought to give to the qualities of sobriety and regularity of life and manners in that sex? Must bold creatures and forward spirits, for ever, and by the best and wisest of us, as well as by the indiscreetest, be the most kindly treated?

My dear friends know not that I *have* actually suffered within *less* than *an inch* of my life.

I must lay down my pen; I am very ill; I believe I shall be better by-and-by. The bad writing would betray me, although I had a mind to keep from you what the event must soon—

* * * *

I resume my trembling pen.

I have wanted no money—so don't be angry. Yet am I glad of what you inclined me to hope—that my friends will give up the produce of my grandfather's estate since it has been in their hands; because, knowing it to be my right, and that *they* could not want it, I had already disposed of a good part of it, and could only hope they would be willing to give it up at my last request. And now how rich shall I think myself in this my last stage? And yet I did not want before—indeed I did not; for who that has many superfluities can be said to want?

* * * *

In the disposition of what belongs to me I have endeavoured to do everything in the best manner I could think of, putting myself in my relations' places, and, in the greater points, ordering my matters as if no misunderstanding had happened.

My cousin, you tell me, thinks I was off my guard, and that I was taken at some advantage. Indeed, my dear, I was not. Indeed I gave no room for advantage to be taken of me. I hope, one day, that will be seen, if I have the justice done me which Mr. Belford assures me of.

I hope that my cousin has not taken the liberties which you seem to charge him with, for it is sad to think that the generality of that sex should make so light of crimes which they justly hold so unpardonable in their own most intimate relations of ours, yet cannot commit them without doing such injuries to other families as they think themselves obliged to resent unto death when offered to their own.

May my story be a warning to all how they prefer a libertine to a man of true honour; and how they permit themselves to be misled, where they mean the best, by the specious yet foolish hope of subduing riveted habits, and, I may say, of altering natures!—the *more* foolish, as constant experience might convince us that there is hardly one in ten of even tolerably happy marriages, in which the wife keeps the hold in the *husband's* affections which she had in the *lover's*. What influence then can she hope to have over the morals of an avowed libertine, who marries perhaps for convenience, who despises the tie, and whom, it is too probable, nothing but old age, or sickness, or disease (the consequence of ruinous riot), can reclaim?

I am very glad you gave my cous—

Sunday morning, September 3rd, 6 o'clock.

HITHER I had written, and was forced to quit my pen. And so much weaker and worse I grew, that had I resumed it to have closed here, it must have been with such trembling unsteadiness, that it would have given you more concern for me than the delay of sending it away by last night's post can do. I deferred it therefore, to see how it would please God to deal with me. And I find myself, after a better night than I expected, lively and clear, and hope to give you a proof that I do, in the continuation of my letter.

I am glad you so considerably gave my cousin Morden favourable impressions of Mr. Belford, since, otherwise, some misunderstanding might have happened between *them*; for although I hope this Mr. Belford is an altered man, and in time will be a reformed one, yet is he one of those high spirits that has been accustomed to resent *imaginary indignities* to *himself*, when, I believe, he has not been studious to avoid giving *real offences* to *others*; men of this cast, acting as if they thought all the world was made to bear with them, and they with nobody in it.

Mr. Lovelace, it seems, thought fit to intrust my cousin with the copy of his letter of penitence to me, and with my answer to it, rejecting him and his suit. And Mr. Belford, moreover, acquaints me how much concerned Mr. Lovelace is for his baseness, and how freely he accused himself to my cousin. This shows that the *true* bravery of spirit is to be above doing a vile action, and that nothing subjects the human mind to so much meanness, as the consciousness of having done wilful wrong to our fellow-creatures. How low, how sordid, are the submissions which elaborate baseness

compels! That that wretch could treat me as he did, and then could so poorly creep to me for forgiveness of crimes so wilful, so black, and so premeditated. How my soul despises him for his meanness! And him whose actions one's heart despises, it is far from being difficult to reject, had one ever so partially favoured him once.

Yet am I glad this violent spirit *can* thus creep; that, like a poisonous serpent, he *can* thus coil himself, and hide his head in his own narrow circlets; because this stooping, this abasement, gives me hope that no further mischief will ensue.

All my apprehension is, what may happen when I am gone, lest then my cousin, or any other of my family, should endeavour to avenge me, and risk their own more precious lives on that account.

If that part of Cain's curse were Mr. Lovelace's, "To be a fugitive and vagabond in the earth," that is to say, if it meant no more harm to him than that he should be obliged to travel, as it seems he intends (though I wish him no ill in his travels) and I could know it, then should I be easy in the hoped-for safety of my friends from his skilful violence. O that I could hear he was a thousand miles off!

When I began this letter, I did not think I could have run to such a length. But 'tis to you, my dearest friend, and you have a title to the spirits you raise and support, for they are no longer mine, and will subside the moment I cease writing to you.

* * * *

May you, my dear Miss Howe, have no discomforts but what you make to yourself! As it will be in your own power to lessen such as these, they ought to be your punishment if you do not. There is no such thing as *perfect happiness* here, since the busy mind will *make* to itself evils, were it to *find* none. You will therefore pardon this limited wish, strange as it may appear till you consider it; for to wish you no infelicities, either within or without you, were to wish you what can never happen in this world.

* * * *

We must not, in short, expect that our roses will grow without thorns.

* * * *

I *must* conclude—

God for ever bless you, and all your love and honour, and reward you here and hereafter for your kindness to

Your ever obliged and affectionate

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

(Mrs. Norton to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.)

Thursday, August 31st.

I HAD written sooner, my dearest young lady, but that I have been endeavouring to obtain a private audience of your mother. Last night I was surprised by an invitation to breakfast at Harlowe Place this morning, and the chariot came early to fetch me, an honour I did not expect.

When I came, I found there was to be a meeting of all your family with Colonel Morden at Harlowe Place; and it was proposed by your mother, and consented to, that I should be present. Your cousin, I understand, had with difficulty brought this meeting to bear, for your brother had before industriously avoided all conversation with him on the affecting subject, urging that it was not necessary to talk to Mr. Morden* upon it, who, being a remoter relation than themselves, had no business to make himself a judge of their conduct to their daughter, their niece, and their sister, especially as he had declared himself in her favour; adding, that he should hardly have patience to be questioned by Mr. Morden on that head.

I was in hopes that your mother would have given me an opportunity of talking with her alone before the company met, but she seemed studiously to avoid it. I dare say, however, not with her inclination.

I was ordered in just before Mr. Morden came, and was bid to sit down, which I did in the window.

The Colonel, when he came, began the discourse by *renewing*, as he called it, his solicitations in your favour. He set before them your penitence, your ill-health, your virtue, though once betrayed and basely used. He then read to them Mr. Lovelace's letter, a most contrite one indeed, and your *high-souled* answer, for that was what he justly called it; and he treated as they deserved some representations founded upon inquiries made by a Mr. Alston, who it seems had gone to London on purpose to acquaint himself with your manner of life, and what was meant by the visits of that Mr. Belford.

He then told them that he had the day before waited upon Miss Howe, and had been shown a letter from you to her, and permitted to take some memorandums from it, in which you appeared, both by handwriting and the contents, to be

* It was not unusual in former days to drop military rank in private society.—ED.

so very ill that it seemed doubtful to him if it were possible for you to get over it. And when he read to them those passages, "What can be done for you now, were your friends to be ever so favourable, and wish, for their sakes more than for your own, that they would still relent," and then say, "you are very ill, you must drop your pen, and ask excuse for your crooked writing, and take, as it were, a last farewell of Miss Howe. *Adieu, my dear, adieu,*" are your words.

"O, my child, my child!" said your mamma, weeping and clasping her hands.

"Dear madam," said your brother, "be so good as to think you have more children than this ungrateful one."

Yet your sister seemed affected.

Your uncle Harlowe, wiping his eyes, "O cousin," said he, "if one thought the poor girl was really so ill."

"She *must*," said your uncle Antony. "This is written to her private friend. God forbid she should be quite lost."

Your uncle Harlowe wished they did not carry their resentments too far.

I begged for God's sake, wringing my hands, and with a bended knee, that they would permit me to go up to you, engaging to give them a faithful account of the way you were in. But I was chidden by your brother, and this occasioned some angry words between him and Mr. Morden.

"I believe, sir; I believe, madam," said your sister to her father and mother, "we need not trouble my cousin to read any more. It does but grieve and disturb you. My sister Clary seems to be ill. I think if Mrs. Norton were permitted to go up to her, it would be right. Wickedly as she has acted, if she be truly penitent——"

Here she stopped, and every one being silent, I stood up once more and besought them to let me go, and then I offered to read a passage or two in your letter to me. But I was taken up again by your brother, and this occasioned still higher words between the colonel and him.

Your mother, hoping to gain upon your inflexible brother, and to divert the anger of the two gentlemen from each other, proposed that the Colonel should proceed in reading the minutes he had taken from your letter.

He accordingly read, "Of your resuming your pen; that you thought you had taken your last farewell;" and the rest of that very affecting passage, in which you are obliged "to break off more than once, and afterwards to take an airing in a chair."

Your brother and sister were affected at this, and he had recourse to his snuff-box. And where you comfort Miss Howe and say, "You shall be happy," "It is more," said your brother, "than she will let anybody else be."

Your sister called you "sweet soul," but with a low voice; then grew hard-hearted again, yet said, "Nobody could help being affected by your pathetic grief, but that it was your talent."

* * * *

Your uncles were also both affected. But your brother went round to each and again reminded your mother that she had other children. "What was there," he said, "in what was read, but the result of the talent you had of moving the passions?" And he blamed them for choosing to hear read what they knew their abused indulgence could not be proof against.

This set Mr. Morden up again. "Fie upon you, Cousin Harlowe!" said he; "I see plainly to whom it is owing that all relationship and ties of blood with regard to this sweet sufferer are laid aside. Such rigours as these make it difficult for a sliding virtue ever to recover itself."

Your brother pretended the honour of the family; and declared that no child ought to be forgiven who could abandon the most indulgent of parents against warning, against the light of knowledge, as you had done.

"But, sir and ladies," said I, rising from my seat in the window, and humbly turning round to each, "if I may be permitted to speak, my dear Miss asks only for a blessing. She does not beg to be received to favour. She is very ill, and asks only for a last blessing."

"Come, come, goody Norton"—I need not tell you who said this—"you are up again with your lamentables! A good woman as you are, to forgive so readily a crime that has been as disgraceful to your part in her education, as to her family, is a weakness that would induce one to suspect your virtue, if you were to be encountered by any temptation."

"By some such charitable logic," said Mr. Morden, "as this is my cousin Arabella captivated, I doubt not. If to be uncharitable and unforgiving is to give a proof of virtue, you, Mr. James Harlowe, are the most virtuous young man in the world."

"I knew how it would be," replied your brother, in a passion, "if I met Mr. Morden upon this business. I would

have declined it, but you, sir (to his father), would not permit me so to do."

"But, sir," turning to the Colonel, "in no other presence——"

"Cousin James," interrupted the other gentleman, "I am not used to bear defiance thus. You are my cousin, sir, and the son and nephew of persons as dear and as near to me,"—there he paused.

"Are we," said your father, "to be made still more unhappy among ourselves, when the villain lives that ought to be the object of every one's resentment who has either a value for the family or for this ungrateful girl?"

"That's the man," said your cousin, "whom last Monday, as you know, I went purposely to make the object of mine. But what could I say, when I found him so willing to repair his crime? And I give it as my opinion, and have written accordingly to my poor cousin, that it is best for all round, that his offer should be accepted; and let me tell you——"

"Tell me nothing," said your father, quite enraged, "of that very vile fellow. I have a riveted hatred to him. I would rather see the rebel die a hundred deaths, were it possible, than that she should give such a villain as him a relation to my family."

"Well, but there is no room to think," said your mother, "that she will give us such a relation, my dear. The poor girl will lessen I fear the number of our relations, not increase it. If she be so ill as we are told she is, let us send Mrs. Norton up to her; that is the *least* we can do: let us take her, however, out of the hands of that Belford.*

Both your uncles supported this motion; the latter part of it especially.

Your brother observed, in his ill-natured way, what a fine piece of consistency it was in you to refuse the vile injurer, and the amends he offered; yet to throw yourself upon the protection of his fast friend.

Miss Harlowe was apprehensive, she said, that you would leave all you *could* leave to that pert creature, Miss Howe, so she called her, if you should die.

"O do not, do not suppose that, my Bella," said your poor mother. "I cannot think of parting with my Clary.—

* Their chief thought in this was that Belford was the friend of Lovelace.—ED.

With all her faults, she is my child.—Her reasons for her conduct are not heard. It would break my heart to lose her. I think, my dear"—to your father—"none so fit as I to go up, if you will give me leave. And Mrs. Norton shall accompany me."

This was a sweet motion, but your brother dashed all. "I hope, sir," said he to his father—"I hope, madam," to his mother, "that you will not endeavour to recover a faulty daughter by losing an unculpable son. I declare that if my sister Clary darkens these doors again, I never will. I will set out, madam, the same hour you go to London on such an errand, to Edinburgh, and there I will reside, and try to forget that I have relations in England—"

"Good God!" said the Colonel. "Suppose, sir, and suppose, madam," turning to your father and mother, "this *should* be the case, whether is it better, think you, that you should lose such a daughter as my cousin Clary, or that your son should go to Edinburgh and reside there upon an estate which will be the better for his residence?"

Your brother's passionate behaviour is hardly to be described. To such a height were resentments carried, that the Colonel, with hands and eyes lifted up, cried out, "O cousin Harlowe,"—to your father, "are you resolved to have but one daughter? Are you, madam, to be taught by your son to forget that you are a mother?"

Then, turning to them with indignation, "I leave ye all," said he, "fit company for one another. I will never open my lips to any of you more upon this subject. I will instantly make my will, and in me shall the dear creature have the father, uncle, brother, she has lost. I will prevail upon her to take the tour of France and Italy with me; nor shall she return till ye know the value of *such* a daughter!"

And saying this, he hurried out of the room, went into the court-yard, and ordered his horse.

Mr. Antony Harlowe went to him there, just as he was mounting, and said he hoped he should find him cooler in the evening—for he till then had lodged at his house, and that then they would converse calmly, and every one, meantime, would weigh all matters well. But the angry gentleman said, "Cousin Harlowe, I shall endeavour to discharge the obligations I owe to your civility since I have been in England. But I have been so treated by that hot-headed young man, who, as far as I know, has done more to ruin his sister than Lovelace himself, that I will not again enter into

your doors, or *theirs*. I will see my dear cousin Clary as soon as I can. And so God bless you all together! Only this one word to your nephew, if you please, that he wants to be taught the difference between courage and bluster; and it is happy for him, perhaps, that I am *his* kinsman, though I am sorry he is *mine*."

I wondered to hear your uncle, on his return to them all, repeat this, because of the consequences it may be attended with, though I hope it will not have bad ones; yet it was considered as a sort of challenge, and so it confirmed everybody in your brother's favour, and Miss Harlowe forgot not to inveigh against that error which had brought on all these evils.

I took the liberty again, but with fear and trembling, to desire leave to attend you.

Before any other person could answer, your brother said, "I suppose you look upon yourself, Mrs. Norton, to be your own mistress. Pray do you want our consents and *courtship* to go up? If I may speak my mind, you and my sister Clary are the *fittest* to be together. Yet I wish you would not trouble your head about our family matters till you are desired to do so."

"But don't you know, brother," said Miss Harlowe, "that the error of any branch of a family splits that family into two parties, and makes not only every common friend and acquaintance, but even *servants*, judges over both? This is one of the blessed effects of my sister Clary's fault."

"There never was a creature so criminal," said your father, looking with displeasure at me, "who had not some weak heads to pity and side with her."

I wept. Your mother was so good as to take me by the hand, "Come, good woman," said she, "come along with me. You have too much reason to be afflicted with what afflicts us to want additions to your grief."

Your mother led me to her chamber, and there we sat and wept together for several minutes, without being able to speak either of us one word to the other. At last she broke silence, asking me if you were really and indeed so ill as it was said you were.

I answered in the affirmative, and would have shown her your last letter, but she declined seeing it.

I would fain have procured from her the favour of a line to you, with her blessing. I asked what was *intended* by your brother and sister. Would nothing satisfy them but your final reprobation? I insinuated how easy it would be, did

not your duty and humility govern you, to make yourself independent as to circumstances, but that nothing but a blessing—a last blessing—was requested by you. And many other things I urged in your behalf. The following brief repetition of what she was pleased to say in answer to my pleas will give you a notion of it all, and of the present situation of things.

She said she was very unhappy. She had lost the little authority she once had over her other children through one child's failing, and all influence over Mr. Harlowe and his brothers. Your father, she said, had besought her to leave it to him to take his own methods with you, and as she valued him, to take no step in your favour unknown to him and your uncles. Yet she owned that they were too much governed by your brother. They would, however, "give way in time," she knew, "to a reconciliation. They designed no other, for they all still loved you."

Your brother and sister, she owned, were very jealous of your coming into favour again. Yet, could but Mr. Morden have kept his temper, and stood her son's first sallies, who, having always had the family grandeur in view, had carried his resentment so high that he knew not how to descend, the conference so abruptly broken off just now would have ended more happily, for that she had reason to think that a few concessions on your part with regard to your grandfather's estate, and your cousin's engaging for your submission from *proper* motives, would have softened them all.

Your intimacy with the friend of the obnoxious man, she said, had very unhappy effects. Before that she had gained some ground, but afterwards dared not, nor indeed had inclination, to open her lips in your behalf. It was wholly unaccountable and as wholly inexcusable, she said.

What made the wished-for reconciliation, she observed, more difficult, was, first, that you yourself acknowledged your dishonour (and it was too well known that it was your own fault that you ever were in the power of so great a profligate); of consequence, that their and your disgrace could not be greater than it was; yet, that you refused to prosecute the wretch. Next, that the pardon and blessing hoped for must probably be attended with your marriage to the man they hate, and who hates them as much. "Very disagreeable circumstances," she said, "I must allow, to found a reconciliation upon."

As to her own part, she must needs say, "that if there were any hope that Mr. Lovelace would become a reformed

man, the letter her cousin Morden had read to them from him to you, and the justice, as she hoped it was, he did your character, though to his own condemnation—his family and fortunes being unexceptionable—were arguments that would have weight with her, could they have any with your father and uncles.”

To my plea of your illness, “She could not but flatter herself,” she answered, “that it was from lowness of spirits and temporary dejection. A young creature so very considerate as you naturally were, and fallen so low, must have enough of that. Should they lose you, which God forbid, the scene would then indeed be sadly changed; for then, those who now most resented would be most grieved. All your fine qualities would rise to their remembrance, and your unhappy error would be quite forgotten.

“She wished you would put yourself into your cousin’s protection entirely, and have nothing more to say to Mr. Belford.”

And I would recommend it to your most serious consideration, my dear Miss Clary, whether now, as your cousin, who is your trustee for your grandfather’s estate, is come, you should not give over all thoughts of Mr. Lovelace’s intimate friend for your executor.

I find they will send you up a large part of what has been received from that estate, since it was yours, together with your current cash, which you left behind you; and this by your cousin Morden, for fear you should have contracted debts, which may make you uneasy.

They seem to expect that you will wish to live at your grandfather’s house, in a private manner, if your cousin prevail not upon you to go abroad for a year or two.

* * * *

Friday morning.

BETTY was with me just now. She tells me that your cousin Morden is so much displeased with them all, that he has refused to lodge any more at your uncle Antony’s, and has even taken up with inconvenient lodgings till he is provided with others to his mind. This very much concerns them, and they repent their violent treatment of him; and the more, as he is resolved, he says, to make you his sole executrix and heir to all his fortune.

What noble fortunes still, my dearest young lady, await you! I am thoroughly convinced, if it please God to preserve

your life and health, that everybody will soon be reconciled to you, and that you will see many happy days.

Your mother wished me not to attend you as yet, because she hopes that I may give myself that pleasure soon with everybody's good liking, and even at their desire. Your cousin Morden's reconciliation with them, which they are very desirous of, I am ready to hope, will include theirs with you.

But if that should happen which I so much dread, and I not with you, I should never forgive myself. Let me therefore, my dearest young lady, desire you to command my attendance, if you find any danger, and if you wish me peace of mind, and no consideration shall withhold me.

I hear that Miss Howe has obtained leave from her mother to see you, and intends next week to go to town for that purpose; and (as it is believed) to buy clothes for her approaching nuptials.

Mr. Hickman's mother-in-law is lately dead. Her jointure of £600 a year has fallen in to him; and she has, moreover, as an acknowledgment of his good behaviour to her, left him all she was worth, which was very considerable, a few legacies excepted to her own relations.

May the Almighty protect and bless you! I long to see you, my dearest young lady, I long to see you, and to fold you once more to my fond heart. I dare to say happy days are coming. Be but cheerful; give way to hope.

Whether for this world or the other, you *must* be happy. Wish to live, however, were it only because you are so well fitted in mind to make every one happy who has the honour to know you. What signifies this transitory eclipse? You are as near perfection, by all I have heard, as any creature in this world can be: for here is your glory, you are brightened and purified, as I may say, by your sufferings. How I long to hear your whole sad story from your own lips!

For Miss Howe's sake, who, in her new engagements, will so much want you; for your cousin Morden's sake; for your mother's, if I must go no farther in your family. And yet I can say, for all their sakes, and for mine, my dearest Miss Clary, let your resumed and accustomed magnanimity bear you up. You have many things to do, which I know not the person who will do, if you leave us.

Join your prayers, then, to mine, that God will spare you to a world that wants you; and, although your days may seem to have been numbered, who knows but that, with the

good King Hezekiah, 'you may have them prolonged?
Which God grant, if it be his blessed will, to the prayers of
Your JUDITH NORTON.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Monday, September 4th.

THE lady would not read the letter she had from Mrs. Norton till she had received the Communion, for fear it should contain anything that might disturb that happy calm which she had been endeavouring to obtain for it; and when that solemn office was over, she was so composed, she said, that she thought she could receive any news, however affecting, with tranquillity.

Nevertheless, in reading it she was forced to leave off several times through weakness and a dimness in her sight, of which she complained, but so easy and soft her complaints that they could hardly be called such.

She was very much affected at divers parts of this letter. She wept several times, and sighed often. Mrs. Lovick told me that these were the gentle exclamations she broke out into as she read:—*Her unkind, her cruel brother! How unsisterly! Poor dear woman!* seeming to speak of Mrs. Norton. *Her kind cousin! O, these flaming spirits!* And then, reflecting upon herself more than once—*What a deep error is mine! What evils have I been the occasion of!*

When I was admitted to her presence, "I have received," said she, "a long and not very pleasing letter from my dear Mrs. Norton. It will soon be in your hands. I am advised against appointing you to the office you have so kindly accepted of, but you must resent nothing of these things. My choice will have an odd appearance to them, but it is now too late to alter it if I would.

"I would fain write an answer to it," continued she; "but I have no distinct sight, Mr. Belford, no steadiness of fingers. This mistiness, however, will perhaps be gone by-and-by." Then turning to Mrs. Lovick, "I don't think I am dying yet—not *actually* dying, Mrs. Lovick—for I have no bodily pain, no numbnesses—no signs of immediate death, I think; and my breath, which used of late to be so short, is now tolerable; my head clear, my intellects free. I think I cannot be dying yet—I shall have agonies, I doubt not—life will not give up so blessedly easy, I fear—yet how merciful is the Almighty, to give his poor creature such a sweet serenity! 'Tis what I have prayed for. What encourage-

ment, Mrs. Lovick, so near one's dissolution, to have it to hope that one's prayers are answered !”

Mrs. Smith, as well as Mrs. Lovick, was with her. They were both in tears; nor had I, any more than they, power to say a word in answer. Yet she spoke all this with a surprising composure of mind and countenance.

“Mr. Belford,” said she, assuming a still sprightlier air and accent, “let me talk a little to you while I am thus able to say what I have to say.”

“Mrs. Lovick, don't leave us,”—for the women were rising to go. “Pray sit down; and do you, Mrs. Smith, sit down too. Dame Shelbourne, take this key, and open that upper drawer. I will move to it.”

She did, with trembling knees. “Here, Mr. Belford, is my will. It is witnessed by three persons of Mr. Smith's acquaintance.

“I dare to hope that my cousin Morden will give you assistance if you request it of him. My cousin Morden continues his affection for me; but as I have not seen *him*, I leave all the trouble upon *you*, Mr. Belford. This deed may want *forms*, and it *does*, no doubt. But the less, as I have my grandfather's will almost by heart, and have *often enough* heard that canvassed. I will lay it by itself in this corner,” putting it at the farther end of the drawer.

She then took up a parcel of letters, enclosed in one cover, sealed with three seals of black wax; “This,” said she, “I sealed up last night. The cover, sir, will let you know what is to be done with what it encloses. This is the superscription,” holding it close to her eyes, and rubbing them, “*As soon as I am certainly dead, this is to be broke open by Mr. Belford.* Here, sir, I put it,” placing it by the will. “These folded papers are letters and copies of letters, disposed according to their dates. Miss Howe will do with those as you and she shall think fit. If I receive any more, or more come when I cannot receive them, they may be put into this drawer,” pulling out the looking-glass drawer, “to be given to Mr. Belford, be they from whom they will. You will be so kind as to observe *that*, Mrs. Lovick and dame Shelbourne.”

“Here, sir, proceeded she, “I put the keys of my apparel,” putting them into the drawers with her papers. “All is in order, and the inventory upon them, and an account of what I have disposed of; so that nobody need to ask Mrs. Smith any questions.

“There will be no immediate need to open or inspect the

trunks which contain my wearing apparel. Mrs. Norton will open them, or order somebody to do it for her in your presence, Mrs. Lovick; for so I have directed in my will. They may be sealed up now; I shall never more have occasion to open them."

She then, though I expostulated with her to the contrary, caused me to seal them up with my seal.

After this, she locked the drawer where were her papers; first taking out her book of *Meditations*, as she called it; saying, she should, perhaps, have use for that; and then desired me to take the key of that drawer; for she should have no further occasion for that neither.

All this in so composed and cheerful a manner, that we were equally surprised and affected with it.

"You can witness for me, Mrs. Smith, and so can you, Mrs. Lovick," proceeded she, "if any one ask after my life and conversation, since you have known me, that I have been very orderly; have kept good hours; and never have lain out of your house, but when I was in prison; and then, you know, I could not help it."

O Lovelace! that thou hadst heard her, or seen her, unknown to herself, on this occasion! Not one of us could speak a word.

"I shall leave the world in perfect charity," proceeded she. And turning towards the women, "don't be so much concerned for me, my good friends. This is all but needful preparation, and I shall be very happy."

Then again rubbing her eyes, which she said were misty, and looking more intently round upon each, particularly on me, "God bless you all!" said she, "how kindly are you concerned for me! Who says, I am friendless? Who says I am abandoned, and among strangers! Good Mr. Belford, indeed," putting her handkerchief to her charming eyes, "you make me less happy than I am sure you wish me to be."

While we were thus solemnly engaged, a servant came with a letter from her cousin Morden. "Then," said she, "he is not come *himself*!"

She broke it open; but every line, she said, appeared two to her; so that, being unable to read it herself, she desired I would read it to her. I did so; and wished it were more consolatory to her, but she was all patient attention; tears, however, often trickling down her cheeks. By the date, it was written yesterday; and this is the substance of it.

He tells her, "That the Thursday before he had procured a general meeting of her principal relations, at her father's;

though not without difficulty, her haughty brother opposing it, and, when met, rendering all his endeavours to reconcile them to her ineffectual. He censures him, as the most ungovernable young man he ever knew; some great sickness, he says, some heavy misfortune, is wanted to bring him to a knowledge of himself, and of what is due from him to others; and he wishes that he were not *her* brother and *his* cousin. Nor does he spare her father and uncles for being so implicitly led by him."

He tells her, "That he parted with them all in high displeasure, and thought never more to darken any of their doors. That he declared as much to her two uncles, who came to him on Saturday, to try to accommodate with him; and who found him preparing to go to London to attend her; and that, notwithstanding their pressing entreaties, he determined so to do, and not to go with them to Harlowe Place, or to either of their own houses; and accordingly dismissed them with such an answer.

"But that her noble letter—as he calls it, her last to him—being brought him about an hour after their departure, he thought it might affect them as much as it did him; and give them the exalted opinion of her virtue which was so well deserved; he therefore turned his horse's head back to her uncle Antony's, instead of forward towards London.

"That accordingly arriving there, and finding her two uncles together, he read to them the affecting letter; which left none of the three a dry eye. That the absent, as is usual in such cases, bearing all the load, they accused her brother and sister; and besought him to put off his journey to town, till he could carry with him the blessings which she had formerly in vain solicited for; and (as they hoped) the happy tidings of a general reconciliation.

"That not doubting but his visit would be the more welcome to her, if these good ends could be obtained, he the more readily complied with their desires. But not being willing to subject himself to the possibility of receiving fresh insults from her brother, he had given her uncles a copy of her letter, for the family to assemble upon; and desired to know, as soon as possible, the result of their deliberations.

"He tells her that he shall bring her up the accounts relating to the produce of her grandfather's estate, and adjust them with her; having actually in his hands the arrears due to her from it.

"He highly applauds the noble manner in which she resents your usage of her. It is impossible, he owns, that

you can either deserve her, or to be forgiven. But as you do justice to her virtue, and offer to make her all the reparation now in your power, and as she is so very earnest with him not to resent that usage, and declares that you could not have been the author of her calamities, but through a strange concurrence of unhappy causes—he desires her not to be apprehensive of any vindictive measures from him.”

Nevertheless (as may be expected), “he inveighs against you, as he finds that she gave you no advantage over her. But he forbears to enter further into this subject, he says, till he has the honour to see her; and the rather, as she seems so much determined against you. However, he cannot but say, that he thinks you a gallant man, and a man of sense, and that you have the reputation of being thought a generous man in every instance but where the sex is concerned. In *such*, he owns, that you have taken inexcusable liberties. And he is sorry to say, that there are very few young men of fortune but who allow themselves in the same. Both sexes, he observes, too much love to have each other in their power. Yet he hardly ever knew man or woman who was very fond of power, make a right use of it.

“If she be so absolutely determined against marrying you, as she declares she is, he hopes, he says, to prevail upon her to take (as soon as her health will permit) a little tour abroad with him, as that will probably establish it; since travelling is certainly the best physic for all those disorders which owe their rise to grief or disappointment. An absence of two or three years will endear her to every one, on her return, and every one to her.

“He expresses his impatience to see her. He will set out,” he says, “the moment he knows the result of her family’s determination, which he doubts not will be favourable. Nor will he wait long for that.”

I asked if I should write to her cousin, as he knew not how ill she was, to hasten up.

“By no means,” she said; “since, if he were not already set out, she was persuaded that she should be so low by the time he could receive my letter and come, that his presence would but discompose and hurry *her* and afflict *him*.”

I hope, however, she is not so very near her end; and, without saying any more to her, when I retired I wrote to Colonel Morden, that if he expects to see his beloved cousin alive, he must lose no time in setting out. I sent this letter by his own servant.

Dr. H. sent away *his* letter to her father by a particular hand this morning.

And as all these, and the copy of the lady's letter to Colonel Morden, will be with them pretty much at a time, the devil's in the family if they are not struck with a remorse that shall burst open the double-barred doors of their hearts.

Will engages to reach you with this, late as it will be, before you go to rest. He begs that I will testify for him the hour and the minute I shall give it him. It is just half an hour after ten.

I pretend to be, now by use, the swiftest short-hand writer in England, next to yourself. But were matter to arise every hour to write upon, and I had nothing else to do, I cannot write so fast as you expect. And let it be remembered, that your servants cannot bring letters or messages before they are written or sent.

J. BELFORD.

(Dr. H. to James Harlowe, senior, Esq.)

London, *September 4th.*

SIR,

If I may judge of the hearts of other parents by my own, I cannot doubt but you will take it well to be informed that you have yet an opportunity to save yourself and family great future regret, by dispatching hither some one of it with your last blessing, and your lady's, to the most excellent of her sex.

I have some reason to believe, sir, that she has been represented to you in a very different light from the true one. And this it is that induces me to acquaint you that I think her, on the best grounds, absolutely irreproachable in all her conduct which has passed under my eye, or come to my ear; and that her very misfortunes are made glorious to her, and honourable to all that are related to her, by the use she has made of them, and by the patience and resignation with which she supports herself in a painful and lingering decay; and by the greatness of mind with which she views her approaching dissolution. And all this from motives in which a dying saint might glory.

She knows not that I write. I must indeed acknowledge that I offered to do so some days ago, and that very pressingly; nor did she refuse me from obstinacy; she seems not to know what that is—but desired me to forbear for two days only, in hopes that her newly-arrived cousin,

who, as she heard, was soliciting for her, would be able to succeed in her favour.

I hope I shall not be thought an officious man on this occasion; but if I am, I cannot help it, being driven to write by a parental and irresistible impulse.

But, sir, whatever you think fit to do, or permit to be done, must be speedily done; for she cannot, I verily think, live a week. And how long of that short space she may enjoy her admirable intellects to take comfort in the favours you may think proper to confer upon her, cannot be said.

I am, sir, your most humble servant,

R. H.

(Mr. Belford to William Morden, Esq.)

London, *September 4th.*

SIR,

THE urgency of the case, and the opportunity by your servant, will sufficiently apologise for this trouble from a stranger to your person, who, however, is not a stranger to your merit.

I understand you are employing your good offices with the parents of Miss Clarissa Harlowe, and other relations, to reconcile them to the most meritorious daughter and kinswoman that ever family had to boast of.

Generously as this is intended by you, we here have too much reason to think all your solitudes on this head will be unnecessary, for it is the opinion of every one who has the honour of being admitted to her presence that she cannot live over three days; so that if you wish to see her alive you must lose no time to come up.

She knows not that I write. I had done it sooner if I had had the least doubt that before now she would not have received from you some news of the happy effects of your kind mediation in her behalf.

I am, sir, your most humble servant,

J. BELFORD.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Uxbridge, *Tuesday morning, between 4 and 5 o'clock.*

AND can it be that this admirable creature will so soon leave this cursed world? For cursed I shall think it, and more cursed myself, when she is gone. O Jack, thou who canst sit so cool, and, like Addison's angel, *direct* and even

enjoy, the storm, that tears up my happiness by the roots, blame me not for my impatience, however unreasonable! If thou knewest that already I feel the torments of the damned, in the remorse that wrings my heart, on looking back upon my past actions by her, thou wouldst not be the devil thou art, to halloo on a worrying conscience, which, without thy merciless aggravations, is altogether intolerable.

I know not what I write, nor what I would write. When the company that used to delight me is as uneasy to me as my reflections are painful, and I can neither help nor divert myself, must not every servant about me partake in a perturbation so sincere?

Shall I give thee a faint picture of the horrible uneasiness with which my mind struggles? And faint indeed it must be; for nothing but outrageous madness can exceed it; and *that* only in the apprehension of others; since, as to the sufferer, it is certain that actual distraction must be an infinitely more happy state than that of suspense and anxiety, which often brings it on.

Forbidden to attend the dear creature, yet longing to see her, I would give the world to be admitted once more to her beloved presence. I ride towards London three or four times a day, resolving *pro* and *con* twenty times in two or three miles, and at last ride back; and, in view of Uxbridge, loathing even the kind friend and hospitable house, turn my horse's head again towards the town, and resolve to gratify my humour, let her take it as she will; but at the very entrance of it, after infinite canvassings, once more alter my mind, dreading to offend and shock her, lest by that means I should curtail a life so precious.

Yesterday in particular, to give you an idea of the strength of that impatience, which I cannot avoid suffering to break out upon my servants, I had no sooner dispatched Will than I took horse to meet him on his return.

In order to give him time, I loitered about on the road, riding up this lane to the one highway, down that to the other, just as my horse pointed, all the way cursing my very being, and though so lately looking down upon all the world, wishing to change conditions with the poorest beggar that cried to me for charity as I rode by him, and throwing him money, in hopes to obtain by his prayers the blessing my heart pants after.

After I had sauntered about an hour or two—which seemed three or four tedious ones—fearing I had slipped

the fellow, I inquired at every turnpike whether a servant in such a livery had not passed through in his return from London on a full gallop, for woe had been to the dog had I met him on a sluggish trot! and lest I should miss him at one end of Kensington, as he might take either the Acton or Hammersmith road; or at the other, as he might come through the Park or not, how many score times did I ride backwards and forwards from the Palace to the Gore, making myself the subject of observation to all passengers, whether on horseback or on foot, who, no doubt, wondered to see a well-dressed and well-mounted man, sometimes ambling, sometimes prancing—as the beast had more fire than his master—backwards and forwards in so short a compass!

Yet all this time, though longing to espy the fellow, did I dread to meet him, lest he should be charged with fatal tidings.

When at a distance I saw any man galloping towards me, my fancy immediately made it out to be him, and then my heart bounded to my mouth, as if it would have choked me. But when the person's nearer approach undeceived me, how did I curse the valet's delay, and thee by turns. And how ready was I to draw my pistol at the stranger for having the impudence to gallop, which none but my messenger, I thought, had either right or reason to do, for all the business of the world, I am ready to imagine, should stand still on an occasion so melancholy and so interesting to me. Nay, for this week past, I could cut the throat of any man or woman I see laugh, while I am in such dejection of mind.

I am now convinced that the wretches who fly from a heavy scene labour under ten times more distress in the intermediate suspense and apprehension, than they could have were they present at it, and to see and know the worst. So capable is fancy or imagination, the more immediate offspring of the soul, to outgo fact, let the subject be either joyous or grievous.

And hence, as I conceive, it is, that all pleasures are greater in the expectation, or in the reflection, than in fruition, as all pains, which press heavy upon both parts of that unequal union by which frail mortality holds its precarious tenure, are ever most acute in the time of suffering, for how easy sit upon the reflection the heaviest misfortunes when surmounted. But most easy, I confess, those in which body has more concern than soul. This, however, is a

point of philosophy I have neither time nor head just now to weigh. So take it as it falls from a madman's pen.

* * * *

Woe be to either of the wretches who shall bring me the fatal news that she is no more, for it is but too likely that a shriek-owl so hated will never whoot or scream again, unless the shock that will probably disorder my whole frame on so sad an occasion, by *unsteady*ing my hand, shall divert my aim from his head or heart, if it turn not against my own.

But surely she will not—she cannot yet die. Such a matchless excellence,

“Whose mind

Contains a world, and seems for all things framed,”

could not be lent to be so soon demanded back again.

But may it not be that thou, Belford, art in a plot with the dear creature (who will not let me attend her to convince myself) in order to work up my soul to the deepest remorse, and that when she is convinced of the sincerity of my penitence, and when my mind is made such wax as to be fit to take what impression she pleases to give it, she will then raise me up with the joyful tidings of her returning health and acceptance of me.

What would I give to have it so, and when the happiness of *hundreds*, as well as the peace and reconciliation of several eminent families depend upon *her* restoration and happiness, why should it not be so?

But let me presume it will. Let me indulge my former hope, however improbable—*I will*, and *enjoy* it too. And let me tell thee how ecstatic my delight would be on the unravelling of such a plot as this.

Do, *dear* Belford, let it be so, and, O my dearest, my ever dear Clarissa, keep me no longer in this cruel suspense, in which I suffer a thousand times more than ever I made thee suffer, nor fear thou that I will resent or recede on an eclaireissement so desirable, for I will adore thee for ever, and without reproaching thee for the pangs thou hast tortured me with, confess thee as much my superior in noble and generous contrivances, as thou art in virtue and honour.

But once more, should the worst happen—say not what that worst is—and I am gone from this hated island—gone for ever—and may eternal—but I am crazed already, and will therefore conclude myself

Thine more than my own

(And no great compliment neither),

R. L.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Tuesday, September 5th, 9 o'clock, at Mr. Smith's.

WHEN I received yours of this morning I could not help pitying you for the account you give of the dreadful anxiety and suspense you labour under. I wish from my heart all were to end as you are so willing to hope, but it will not be, and your suspense, if the worst part of your torment, as you say it is, will soon be over; but alas! in a way you wish not.

I attended the lady just now. She is extremely ill, yet is she aiming at an answer to her Norton's letter, which she began yesterday in her own chamber, and has written a good deal, but in a hand not like her own fine one, as Mrs. Lovick tells me, but much larger, and the lines crooked.

I have accepted of the offer of a room adjoining to the widow Lovick's, till I see how matters go, but unknown to the lady, and I shall go home every night for a few hours. I would not lose a sentence that I could gain from lips so instructive, nor the opportunity of receiving any command from her, for an estate.

In this, my new apartment, I now write, and shall continue to write, as occasions offer, that I may be the more circumstantial. But I depend upon the return of my letters, or copies of them, on demand, that I may have together all that relates to this affecting story, which I shall re-peruse with melancholy pleasure to the end of my life.

* * * *

Three o'clock.

THE lady has just finished her letter, and has entertained Mrs. Lovick, Mrs. Smith, and me, with a noble discourse on the vanity and brevity of life, to which I cannot do justice in the repetition; and, indeed, I am so grieved for her, that, ill as she is, my intellects are not half so clear as hers.

A few things which made the strongest impression upon me, as well from the sentiments themselves, as from her manner of uttering them, I remember. She introduced them thus:—

“I am thinking,” said she, “what a gradual and happy death God Almighty, blessed be his name, affords me! Who would have thought that, suffering what I have suffered, and abandoned as I have been, with such a tender education as I have had, I should be so long a dying! But see how, by little and little, it has come to this. I was first taken off

from the power of walking; then I took a coach. A coach grew too violent an exercise; then I took a chair. The prison was a large death-stride upon me; I should have suffered longer else. Next, I was unable to go to church; then to go up or downstairs. Now hardly can move from one room to another; and a less room will soon hold me. My eyes begin to fail me so, that at times I cannot see to read distinctly; and now I can hardly write, or hold a pen. Next, I presume, I shall know nobody, nor be able to thank any of you; I therefore now once more thank you Mrs. Lovick, and you Mrs. Smith, and you Mr. Belford, while I *can* thank you, for all your kindness to me. And thus, by little and little, in such a gradual, sensible death as I am blessed with, God *dies away in us*, as I may say, all human satisfactions, in order to subdue his poor creatures to Himself."

Thou mayst guess how affected we all were at this moving account of her progressive weakness. We heard it with wet eyes; for what with the women's example, and what with her moving eloquence, I could no more help it than they. But we were silent nevertheless; and she went on, applying herself to me:—

"Oh, Mr. Belford, this is a poor, transitory life in its best enjoyments. We flutter about here and there, with all our vanities about us, like painted butterflies, for a gay, but a very short season, till at last we lay ourselves down in a quiescent state, and turn into vile worms. And who knows in what form, or to what condition, we shall rise again?"

"I wish you would permit me, a young creature, just turned nineteen years of age, blooming and healthy as I was a few months ago, now nipped by the cold hand of death, to influence you in *these my last hours*, to a life of regularity and repentance for any past evils you may have been guilty of. For, believe me, sir, that now, in this last stage, very few things will bear the test, or be passed as laudable, if pardonable, at our own Bar, much less at a more tremendous one, in all we have done, or delighted in, even in a life not very offensive neither, as *we* may think. Ought we not, then, to study, before the dark hours approach, so to live, as may afford reflections that will soften the agony of the last moments when they come?"

She was ready to faint, and, choosing to lie down, I withdrew—I need not say, with a melancholy heart. And when I was got to my apartment, my heart was still more affected by the sight of the solemn letter the admirable lady had so

lately finished. It was communicated to me by Mrs. Lovick, who had it to copy for me ; but it was not to be *delivered to me* till after her departure. However, I trespassed so far as to prevail upon the widow to let me take a copy of it, which I did directly in character.

I send it enclosed. If thou canst read it, and thy heart not bleed at thy eyes, thy remorse can hardly be so deep as thou hast inclined me to think it is.

(Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Mrs. Norton.)*

MY DEAREST MRS. NORTON,

I AM afraid I shall not be able to write all that is upon my mind to say to you upon the subject of your last. Yet I will try.

As to my friends, I cannot help being afflicted for *them*. What, alas ! has not my mother, in particular, suffered by my rashness : yet to allow so much for a son, so little for a daughter. But all now will soon be over, as to me. I hope they will bury all their resentments in my grave.

As to your advice in relation to Mr. Belford, let me only say, that the unhappy reprobation I have met with, and my short time, must be my apology now. I wish I *could* have written to my mother and my uncles, as you advise. And yet, favours come *so* slowly from them.

The granting of one request only now remains as desirable from them. Which, nevertheless, when granted, I shall not be sensible of. It is, that they will be pleased to permit my remains to be laid with those of my ancestors—placed at the feet of my dear grandfather, as I have mentioned in my will. This, however, as they please. For, after all, this vile body ought not so much to engage my cares. It is a weakness, but let it be called a *natural* weakness, and I shall be excused, especially when a reverential gratitude shall be known to be the foundation of it. You know, my dear woman, how my grandfather loved me ; and you know how much I honoured him, and that from my very infancy to the hour of his death. How often since have I wished that he had not loved *me* so well !

I wish not now, at the writing of this, to see even my cousin Morden. O my blessed woman ! my dear maternal friend, I am entering upon a better tour than to France or Italy either, or even than to settle at my once beloved dairy-

* Begun on Monday, September 4th, and by piecemeal finished on Tuesday ; but not sent till the Thursday following.

house. All these prospects and pleasures, which used to be so agreeable to me in health, how poor seem they to me now!

Indeed, indeed, my dear Mamma Norton, I shall be happy! —I *know* I shall! I have charming forebodings of happiness already. Tell all my dear friends, for their comfort, that I shall. Who would not bear the punishments I have borne, to have the prospects and assurances I rejoice in? Assurances I might *not have had*, were my own wishes to have been granted to me.

Neither do I want to see even *you*, my dear Mrs. Norton. Nevertheless, I must, in justice to my own gratitude, declare that there *was* a time, could you have been permitted to come without incurring displeasure from those whose esteem it is necessary for you to cultivate and preserve, that your presence and comfortings would have been balm to my wounded mind. But were you now, even by consent, and with reconciliatory tidings, to come, it would but add to your grief; and the sight of one I so dearly love, so happily fraught with good news, might but draw me back to wishes I have had great struggles to get above. And let me tell you for your comfort that I have not left undone anything that ought to be done, either respecting mind or person—no, not to the minutest preparation; so that nothing is left for you to do for me. Every one has her direction as to the last offices, and my desk, that I now write upon—O, my dearest Mrs. Norton, all is provided; all is ready; and all will be as decent as it should be.

And pray let my Miss Howe know that by the time you will receive this, and she *your* signification of the contents of it, it will, in all probability, be too late for *her* to do me the inestimable favour, as I should once have thought it, to see me. *God will have no rivals in the hearts of those he sanctifies.* By various methods He deadens all other sensations, or rather absorbs them all in the love of Him.

I shall, nevertheless, love *you*, my Mamma Norton, and my Miss Howe, whose love to me *has passed the love of women*, to my latest hour. But yet I am now above the quick sense of those pleasures which once most delighted me; and once more I say that I do not wish to see objects so dear to me, which might bring me back again into sense, and rival my *supreme love*.

* * * *

Twice have I been forced to leave off. I *wished* that my last writing might be to you, or to Miss Howe, if it might not be to my dearest ma—*mamma*. I would have wrote. Is

the word distinct? My eyes are *so* misty. If when I apply to you, I break off in half-words, do you supply them. The kindest are *your* due—be sure take the kindest, to fill up chasms with, if any chasms there be——

* * * *

Another breaking off! But the new day seems to rise upon me with healing in its wings. I have gotten, I think, a recruit of strength; spirits, I bless God, I have not of late wanted.

Let my dearest Miss Howe purchase her wedding garments; and may all temporal blessings attend the charming preparation! Blessings *will*, I make no question, notwithstanding the little cloudinesses that Mr. Hickman encounters with now and then, which are but prognostics of a future golden day to him; for her heart is good, and her head not wrong. But great merit is coy, and that coyness has not always its foundation in pride; but if it should *seem* to be pride, take off the skin-deep covering, and, in her, it is noble diffidence, and a love that wants but to be assured.

Tell Mr. Hickman I write this, and write it, as I believe, with my last pen; and bid him *bear* a little at first, and *forbear*; and all the future will be crowning gratitude and rewarding love; for Miss Howe has great sense, fine judgment, and exalted generosity; and can such a one be ungrateful or easy under those obligations which his assiduity and obligingness (when he shall be so happy as to call her his) will lay her under to him?

As for me, never bride was so ready as I am! My wedding garments are bought, and though not fine or gaudy to the sight, though not adorned with jewels, and set off with gold and silver, for I have no beholders' eyes to wish to glitter in, yet will they be the easiest, the *happiest* suit that ever bridal maiden wore; for they are such as carry with them a security against all those anxieties, pains, and perturbations which sometimes succeed to the most promising out-settings.

And now, my dear Mrs. Norton, do I wish for no other.

O hasten, good God, if it be thy blessed will, the happy moment that I am to be decked out in this all-quieting garb! and sustain, comfort, bless, and protect with the all-shadowing wing of thy mercy, my dear parents, my uncles, my brother, my sister, my cousin Morden, my ever-dear and ever-kind Miss Howe, my good Mrs. Norton, and every deserving person to whom *they* wish well! is the ardent

prayer, first and last, of every beginning hour, as the clock tells it me, hours now are days, nay years, of

Your now not sorrowing nor afflicted, but happy

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Wednesday morning, September 6th, half-past 3 o'clock.

I AM *not* the savage which you and my worst enemies think me. My soul is *too much* penetrated by the contents of the letter which you enclosed in your last, to say one word more to it, than that my heart has bled over it from every vein! I will fly from the subject, but what other can I choose, that will not be as grievous, and lead into the same?

I could quarrel with all the world; with thee as well as the rest; obliging as thou supposest thyself for writing to me hourly. How daredst thou (though unknown to her) to presume to take an apartment under the same roof with her? I cannot bear to think that thou shouldst be seen at all hours passing to and repassing from her apartments, while *I*, who have so much reason to call her mine, and once was preferred by her to all the world, am forced to keep aloof, and hardly dare to enter the *city* where she is?

Nothing now will ever divert me, will ever again give me joy or pleasure! I can neither eat, drink, nor sleep. I am sick of all the world.

* * * *

Surely it will be better when *all is over*, when I know the *worst* the fates can do against me; yet how shall I bear that *worst*? O Belford, Belford! write it not to me; but, if it *must* happen, get somebody else to write; for I shall curse the pen, the hand, the head, and the heart employed in communicating to me the fatal tidings. But what is this saying, when already I curse the whole world except her—myself most?

In fine, I am a most miserable being. Life is a burden to me. I would not bear it upon these terms for one week more, let what would be my lot; for already is there a hell begun in my own mind. Never more mention to me, let *her* or who will say it, the *prison*—I cannot bear it—may damnation seize quick the accursed woman who could set death upon taking that *large stride*, as the dear creature calls it! I had no hand in it! But her relations, her implacable relations have done the business. All else would have been got

over. Never persuade me but it would. The *fire of youth* would have pleaded for me to good purpose with an individual of a sex which loves to be addressed with passionate ardour, had it not been for that cruelty and unforgivingness which (the object and the penitence considered) have no example, and have aggravated the heinousness of my faults.

Unable to rest, though I went not to bed till two, I dispatch this ere the day dawn! Who knows what this night—this dismal night, may have produced?

I must after my messenger. I have told the varlet I will meet him—perhaps at Knightsbridge—perhaps in Piccadilly; and I trust not myself with pistols, not only on his account, but my own; for pistols are *too ready* a mischief.

I hope thou hast a letter ready for him. He goes to thy lodgings first; for surely thou wilt not presume to take thy rest in an apartment near hers. If he miss thee there, he flies to Smith's, and brings me word whether in being or not.

I shall look for him through the air as I ride, as well as on horseback; for if the prince of it serve *me*, as well as I have served *him*, he will bring the dog by his ears, like another Habakkuk, to my saddle-bow, with the tidings that my heart pants after.

Nothing but the excruciating pangs the condemned soul feels, at its entrance into the eternity of the torments we are taught to fear, can exceed what I *now* feel, and *have* felt for almost this week past; and mayest thou have a spice of those, if thou hast not a letter ready written for

Thy LOVELACE.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Thursday, September 5th, 6 o'clock.

THE lady remains exceedingly weak and ill. Her intellects, nevertheless, continue clear and strong, and her piety and patience are without example. Every one thinks this night will be her last. What a shocking thing is that to say of such an excellence! She will not, however, send away her letter to her Norton as yet. She endeavoured in vain to superscribe it; so desired me to do it. Her fingers will not hold her pen with the requisite steadiness. She has, I fear, written and read her last!

Eight o'clock.

SHE is somewhat better than she was. The doctor has been here, and thinks she will hold out yet a day or two.

He has ordered her, as for some time past, only some little cordials to take when ready to faint. She seemed disappointed when he told her she might yet live two or three days; and said, "she longed for dismission!" Life was not so easily extinguished, she saw, as some imagine. *Death from grief*, was, she believed, *the slowest of deaths*. But God's will must be done! Her only prayer was now for submission to it; for she doubted not but by the divine goodness she should be a happy creature as soon as she could be divested of these *rags of mortality*.

Of her own accord she mentioned you; which, till then, she had avoided to do. She asked, with great serenity, where you were?

I told her where, and your motives of being so near; and read to her a few lines of yours of this morning, in which you mention your wishes to see her, your sincere affliction, and your resolution not to approach her without her consent.

I would have read more; but she said, "Enough, Mr. Belford, enough! Poor man! Does his conscience begin to find him? Then need not anybody wish him a greater punishment! May it work upon him to a happy purpose!"

I took the liberty to say, that as she was in such a frame that nothing now seemed capable of discomposing her, I could wish that you might have the benefit of her exhortations, which, I dared to say, while you were so seriously affected, would have a greater force upon you than a thousand sermons; and how happy you would think yourself, if you could but receive her forgiveness on your knees.

"How can you think of such a thing, Mr. Belford," said she, with some emotion; "my composure is owing, next to the divine goodness blessing my earnest supplications for it, to the *not* seeing him. Yet, let him know that I now again repeat that I forgive him; and may God Almighty [clasping her fingers and lifting up her eyes] forgive him too, and perfect his repentance and sanctify it to him. Tell him I say so; and tell him that if I could not say so with my whole heart I should be very uneasy, and think that my hopes of mercy to myself were but weakly founded; and that I had still, in my harboured resentments, some hankerings after a life which he has been the cause of shortening."

The divine creature then turning aside her head—"Poor man," said she, "I once could have loved him. This is saying more than ever I could say of any other man out of my own family. Would he have permitted me to have been a humble instrument to have made him good, I think I

could have made him happy. But tell him not this, if he be *really* penitent; it may too much affect him." There she paused.

Admirable creature! Heavenly forgiver! Then resuming—"But pray tell him that if I could know that my death might be a means to reclaim and save him, it would be an inexpressible satisfaction to me. But let me not, however, be made uneasy with the apprehension of seeing him. I cannot *bear* to see him."

Just as she had done speaking, the minister, who had so often attended her, sent up his name, and was admitted.

Being apprehensive that it would be with difficulty that you could prevail upon that impetuous spirit of yours not to invade her in her dying hours, and of the agonies into which a surprise of this nature would throw her, I thought this gentleman's visit afforded a proper opportunity to renew the subject; and, having asked her leave, acquainted him with the topic we had been upon.

The good man urged that some condescensions were usually expected on these solemn occasions from pious souls like hers, however satisfied with *themselves*, for the sake of showing the *world*, and for *example sake*, that all resentments against those who had most injured them were subdued; and if she would vouchsafe to a heart so truly penitent as I had represented Mr. Lovelace's to be, that *personal* pardon which I had been pleading for, there would be no room to suppose the least lurking resentment remained, and it might have very happy effects upon the gentleman.

"I have no lurking resentment, sir," said she, "this is not a time for resentment; and you will be the readier to believe me, when I can assure you (looking at me) that even what I have most rejoiced in, the truly friendly love that has so long subsisted between my Miss Howe and her Clarissa, although to my last gasp it will be the dearest to me of all that is dear in this life, has already abated of its fervour—has already given place to supreamer fervours. And shall the remembrance of Mr. Lovelace's insults, which, I bless God, never corrupted that *mind* which *her* friendship so much delighted, be stronger in these hours with me than the remembrance of a love as pure as the human heart ever boasted? Tell, therefore, the *world*, if you please, and (if, Mr. Belford, you think what I said to you before not strong enough) tell the poor man that I not only forgive him, but have *such* earnest wishes for the good of his soul, and that from considerations of its immortality, that could my peni-

tence avail for more sins than my own, my last tear should fall for him by whom I die."

Our eyes and hands expressed for us both what our lips could not utter.

"Say not then," proceeded she, "nor let it be said that my resentments are unsubdued. And yet these eyes, lifted up to heaven as witness to the truth of what I have said, shall never, if I can help it, behold him more, for do you not consider, sirs, how short my time is, what much more important subjects I have to employ it upon, and how unable I should be, so weak as I am, to contend even with the avowed penitence of a person in strong health, governed by passions unabated and always violent? And now I hope you will never urge me more on this subject."

The minister said it were pity ever to urge this plea again.

You see, Lovelace, that I did not forget the office of a friend in endeavouring to prevail upon her to give you her last forgiveness personally. And I hope, as she is so near her end, you will not invade her in her last hours, since she must be extremely discomposed at such an interview, and it might make her leave the world the sooner for it.

This reminds me of an expression which she used on your barbarous hunting her at Smith's on her return to her lodgings, and that with a serenity unexampled (as Mrs. Lovick told me, considering the occasion, and the trouble given her by it, and her indisposition at the time). "He will not let me die decently," said the angelic sufferer; "he will not let me enter into my Maker's presence with the composure that is required in entering into the drawing-room of an earthly prince."

I cannot, however, forbear to wish that the heavenly creature could have prevailed upon herself in these her last hours to see you, and that for *my* sake as well as *yours*; for although I am determined never to be guilty of the crimes which till within these few past weeks have blackened my former life, and for which at present I most heartily hate myself, yet should I be less apprehensive of a relapse, if, wrought upon by the solemnity which such an interview must have been attended with, you had become a reformed man, for no devil do I fear but one in your shape.

* * * *

It is now eleven o'clock at night. The lady, who retired to rest an hour ago, is, as Mrs. Lovick tells me, in a sweet slumber.

I will close here. I hope I shall find her the better for it in the morning. Yet, alas! how frail is hope. How frail is life, when we are apt to build so much on every shadowy relief, although in such a desperate case as this, sitting down to reflect, we *must* know that it is *but* shadowy.

J. B.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Wednesday morning, September 6th.

AND is she somewhat better? Blessings upon thee without number or measure. Let her still be better and better. *Tell* me so at least, if she be *not* so, for thou knowest not what a joy that poor temporary reprieve, that she will hold out yet a day or two, gave me.

But who told this hard-hearted and death-pronouncing doctor that she will hold out no longer? By what warrant says he this? What presumption in these parading solemn fellows of a college which will be my contempt to the latest hour of my life, if this brother of it, eminent as he is deemed to be, cannot work an ordinary miracle in *her* favour, or rather in *mine*.

Let me tell thee, Belford, that already he deserves the *utmost* contempt for suffering the charming clock to run down so low. What must be his art, if it could not wind it up in a quarter of the time he has attended her, when, at his first visits, the springs and wheels of life and motion were so good, that they seemed only to want common care and oiling!

I am obliged to you for endeavouring to engage her to see me. 'Twas acting like a friend. If she *had* vouchsafed me that favour, she should have seen at her feet the most abject adorer that ever kneeled to justly-offended beauty.

What she bid you, and what she *forbid* you, to tell me—the latter for *tender* considerations—that she forgives me; and that, could she have made me a *good* man, she could have made me a *happy* one!—that she even *loved* me! At such a moment to own that *she once loved me*! Never *before* loved any man! That she prays for me! That her last tear should be shed for me, could she by it save a soul, doomed, without *her*, to perdition!—O Belford, Belford! I cannot bear it! What a dog, what a devil, have I been to a goodness so superlative! Why does she not inveigh against me? Why does she not execrate me? O the triumphant subduer!—Ever above me! And now to leave me so infinitely below her!

Marry, and repair at any time. This, wretch that I was! was my plea to myself. To give her a lowering sensibility; to bring her down from among the stars which her beamy head was surrounded by, that my wife, so greatly above me, might not despise me; this was one of my reptile motives, owing to my *more* reptile envy, and to my consciousness of inferiority to her! Yet she, from step to step, from distress to distress, to maintain her superiority; and, like the sun, to break out upon me with the greater refulgence for the clouds that I had contrived to cast about her. And now to escape me thus! No power left me to repair her wrongs! No alleviation to my self-reproach!—no dividing of blame with her!

Tell her, O tell her, Belford, that her prayers and wishes, her superlatively generous prayers and wishes, shall *not* be vain: that I *can*, and *do* repent—and *long* have repented. Tell her of my frequent deep remorsees. It was impossible that such remorsees should not at last produce *effectual* remorse. Yet she must not leave me—she must live, if she would wish to have my contrition perfect—for what can despair produce?

* * * *

I will do everything you would have me do, in the return of your letters. You have infinitely obliged me by this last, and by pressing for an admission for me, though it succeeded not.

Once more, how could I be such a villain to so divine a creature! yet love her all the time, as never man loved woman! Curse upon my *contriving genius*! Curse upon my *intriguing head*, and upon my *seconding heart*! To sport with the fame, with the honour, with the *life*, of such an angel of a woman! O my damn'd incredulity! That, believing her to *be* a woman, I must hope to *find* her a woman! On my incredulity, that there could be such virtue (virtue for *virtue's* sake) in the sex, founded I my hope of succeeding with her.

But say not, Jack, that she must leave us yet. If she recover, and if I can but re-obtain her favour, then indeed will life be life to me. The world never *saw* such a husband as I will make. I will have no will but hers. She shall conduct me in all my steps. She shall open and direct my prospects, and turn every motion of my heart as she pleases.

You tell me in your letter, that at eleven o'clock she had sweet rest; and my servant acquaints me from Mrs. Smith,

that she has had a good night. What hope does this fill me with! I have given the fellow five guineas for his good news, to be divided between him and his fellow-servant.

Dear, dear Jack! confirm this to me in thy next—for *Heaven's* sake do! Tell the doctor I will make him a present of a thousand guineas if he recover her. Ask if a consultation be necessary.

Adieu, dear Belford! Confirm, I beseech thee, the hopes that now with sovereign gladness have taken possession of a heart that, next to hers, is

Thine.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Wednesday morning, 8 o'clock, September 6th.

YOUR servant arrived here before I was stirring. I sent him to Smith's to inquire how the lady was, and ordered him to call upon me when he came back. I was pleased to hear she had had tolerable rest. As soon as I had despatched him with the letter I had written over-night, I went to attend her.

I found her up, and dressed in a white satin nightgown. Ever elegant, but now more so than I had seen her for a week past. Her aspect serenely cheerful.

She mentioned the increased dimness of her eyes, and the tremor which had invaded her limbs. "If this be dying," said she, "there is nothing at all shocking in it. My body hardly sensible of pain, my mind at ease, my intellects clear and perfect as ever. What a good and gracious God have I!—for this is what I always prayed for."

I told her it was not so serene with you.

"There is not the same reason for it," replied she. "'Tis a choice comfort, Mr. Belford, at the winding-up of our short story, to be able to say, I have rather *suffered* injuries *myself* than *offered* them to *others*. I bless God, though I have been unhappy, as the *world* deems it, and once I thought more so than at present I think I ought to have done, since my calamities were to work out for me my everlasting happiness; yet have I not wilfully made any one creature so. I have no reason to grieve for anything but for the sorrow I have given my friends.

"But pray, Mr. Belford, remember me in the best manner to my cousin Morden; and desire him to comfort them, and to tell them that all would have been the same had they accepted of my true penitence, as I wish and as I trust the Almighty has done."

I was called down; it was to Harry, who was just returned from Miss Howe's, to whom he carried the lady's letter. The stupid fellow, being bid to make haste with it and return as soon as possible, stayed not till Miss Howe had it, she being at the distance of five miles, although Mrs. Howe would have had him stay, and sent a man and horse purposely with it to her daughter.

Wednesday morning, 10 o'clock.

THE poor lady is just recovered from a fainting fit, which has left her at death's door. Her late tranquillity and freedom from pain seemed but a *lightening*, as Mrs. Lovick and Mrs. Smith call it.

By my faith, Lovelace, I had rather part with all the friends I have in the world, than with this lady. I never knew what a virtuous, a holy friendship, as I may call mine to her, was before. But to be so *new* to it, and to be obliged to forego it so soon, what an affliction! Yet, thank heaven, I lose her not by *my own* fault! But it would be barbarous not to spare thee now.

She has sent for the divine who visited her before, to pray with her.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Kensington, Wednesday noon.

LIKE Æsop's traveller, thou blowest hot and cold, life and death, in the same breath, with a view, no doubt, to distract me. How familiarly dost thou use the words, *dying, dimness, tremor*? Never did mortal ring so many changes on so few bells. Thy barbarous reflection, that thou lovest her not by thy own fault, is never to be forgiven. Thou hast but one way to atone for the torments thou givest me, and that is by sending me word that she is better, and will recover. Whether it be true or not, let me be told so, and I will go abroad rejoicing and believing it, and my wishes and imagination shall make out all the rest.

If she live but one year, that I may acquit myself to myself—no matter for the world—that her death is not owing to me, I will compound for the rest.

Will neither vows nor prayers save her? I never prayed in my life, put all the years of it together, as I have done for this fortnight past: and I have most sincerely repented of all my baseness to her,—and will nothing do?

But after all, if she recover not, *this* reflection must be my comfort—and it is *truth*—that her *departure* will be

owing rather to wilfulness, to downright *female* wilfulness, than to any other cause.

It is difficult for people who pursue the dictates of a violent resentment to stop where they first designed to stop.

I have the charity to believe that even James and Arabella Harlowe, at first, intended no more by the confederacy they formed against this their angel sister than to disgrace and keep her down, lest, sordid wretches! their uncles should follow the example her grandfather had set, to *their* detriment.

So this lady, as I suppose, intended only at first to vex and plague me; and, finding she could do it to purpose, her desire of revenge insensibly became stronger in her than the desire of life. And now she is willing to die, as an event which she thinks will cut my heart-strings asunder. And still the *more* to be revenged, puts on the Christian, and forgives me.

But I'll have none of her forgiveness! My own heart tells me, I do not deserve it; and I cannot bear it!—And what is it, but a mere *verbal* forgiveness, as ostentatiously as cruelly given with a view to magnify herself, and wound me deeper? A little, dear, specious—but let me stop—lest I blaspheme!

* * * *

Reading over the above, I am ashamed of my ramblings. But what wouldst have me to do? Seest thou not that I am but seeking to run out of myself, in hope to lose myself; yet that I am unable to do either.

If *ever* thou lovest but half so fervently as I love,—but of that thy heavy soul is not capable.

Send me word by the next, I conjure thee, in the names of all her kindred saints and angels, that she is living, and likely to live! If thou sendest ill news, thou wilt be answerable for the consequence, whether it be fatal to the messenger, or to

Thy LOVEFACE.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Wednesday, 11 o'clock.

DR. H. has just been here. He tarried with me till the minister had done praying by the lady; and then we were both admitted. Mr. Goddard, who came while the doctor and the clergyman were with her, went away with them when they went. They took a solemn and everlasting leave

of her, as I have no scruple to say—blessing her, and being blessed by her, and wishing, when it came to be their lot, for an exit as happy as hers is likely to be.

She had again earnestly requested of the doctor his opinion how long it was *now* probable that she could continue. And he told her that he apprehended she should hardly see to-morrow night. She said she should number the hours with greater pleasure than ever she numbered any in her life, on the most joyful occasion.

How unlike poor Belton's last hours, hers! See the infinite difference in the effects on the same awful and affecting occasion between a good and a bad conscience.

This moment a man is come from Miss Howe with a letter. Perhaps I shall be able to send you the contents.

* * * *

She endeavoured several times with earnestness, but in vain, to read the letter of her dear friend. The writing, she said, was too fine for her grosser sight, and the lines staggered under her eye. And indeed she trembled so she could not hold the paper, and at last desired Mrs. Lovick to read it to her, the messenger waiting for an answer.

Thou wilt see in Miss Howe's letter how different the expression of the same impatiency and passionate love is when dictated by the gentler mind of a woman, from that which results from a mind so boisterous as thine, for Mrs. Lovick will transcribe it, and I shall send it, to be read in this place if thou wilt.

(Miss Howe to Clarissa.)

Tuesday, September 5th.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

WHAT will become of your poor Anna Howe? I see by your writing, as well as read by your own account, which, were you not very, *very* ill, you would have touched more tenderly, how it is with you. Why have I thus long delayed to attend you! Could I think that the comfortings of a faithful friend were as nothing to a gentle mind in distress, that I could be prevailed upon to forbear visiting you so much as *once* in all this time? I, as well as everybody else, to desert and abandon my dear creature to strangers! What will become of me if you be as bad as my apprehensions make you?

I will set out this moment, little as the encouragement is that you give me to do so. My mother is willing I should. Why, O why, was she not *before* willing?

Yet she persuades me too, lest I should be fatally affected were I to find my fears too well justified, to wait the return of this messenger, who rides our swiftest horse. God speed him with good news to me, else—but, oh, my dearest, dearest friend, what else: one line from your hand by him. Send me but *one* line to bid me attend you. I will set out the very moment I receive it. I am now actually ready to do so, and if you love me as I love you, the sight of me will revive you to my hopes. But why, why, when I can think this, did I not go up sooner?

Blessed Heaven! deny not to my prayers my friend, my admonisher, my adviser, at a time so critical to myself!

But methinks your letters are too well connected, too full of life and vigour, to give cause for so much despair as the staggering pen seems to forebode.

I am sorry I was not at home when Mr. Belford's servant came with your affecting letter. I was at Miss Lloyd's. My mamma sent it to me, and I came home that instant, but he was gone; yet I wanted to ask him a hundred thousand questions. But why delay I thus my messenger? I have a multitude of things to say to you—to advise with you about. You shall direct me in everything. I will obey the holding up of your finger. But if *you* leave me, what is the world or anything in it to

Your

ANNA HOWE,

The effect this letter had on the lady, who is so near the end which the fair writer so much apprehends and deplores, obliged Mrs. Lovick to make many breaks in reading it, and many changes of voice.

"This *is* a friend," said the divine lady, taking the letter in her hand, and kissing it, "worth wishing to live for. O, my dear Anna Howe! how uninterruptedly sweet and noble has been our friendship! But we shall one day meet (and this hope must comfort us both), never to part again. Then, divested of the shades of body, shall we be all light and all mind! Then how unalloyed, how perfect will be our friendship! Our love then will have one and the same adorable object, and we shall enjoy it and each other to all eternity.

She said, her dear friend was so earnest for a line or two that she would fain write if she could; and she tried, but to no purpose. She could dictate, however, she believed, and desired Mrs. Lovick would take pen and paper, which she did, and then she dictated to *her*. I would have withdrawn, but at her desire stayed.

She wandered a good deal at first; she took notice that she did. And when she got into a little train, not pleasing herself, she apologised to Mrs. Lovick for making her begin again and again, and said that the third time should go, let it be as it would.

She dictated the farewell part without hesitation; and when she came to the blessing and subscription, she took the pen, and, dropping on her knees, supported by Mrs. Lovick, wrote the conclusion; but Mrs. Lovick was forced to guide her hand.

You will find the sense surprisingly entire, her weakness considered.

I made the messenger wait while I transcribed it. I have endeavoured to imitate the subscriptive part, and in the letter made pauses where, to the best of my remembrance, she paused. In nothing that relates to this admirable lady can I be too minute.

Wednesday, near 3 o'clock.

MY DEAREST MISS HOWE,

YOU must not be surprised nor grieved that Mrs. Lovick writes for me. Although I cannot obey you, and write with my *pen*, yet my *heart* writes by hers. Accept it so; it is the nearest to obedience I can.

And now, what *ought* I to say? What *can* I say? But why should you not know the truth—since soon you must—very soon?

* * * *

Know, then, and let your tears be those of *joyful* pity, for I permit you to shed a few, to embalm, as I may say, a fallen blossom—know, then, that the good doctor, and the pious clergyman, and the worthy apothecary, have just now, with joint benedictions, taken their last leave of me; and the former bids me hope—do, my dearest, let me say *hope*—hope for my enlargement before to-morrow sunset.

* * * *

Adieu, therefore, my dearest friend! Be this *your* consolation, as it is *mine*, that in God's good time we shall meet in a blessed eternity, never more to part! Once more, then, adieu! and be happy, which a generous nature cannot be, unless it makes others so too.

God for ever bless you! prays, on my bended knees,

Your obliged, grateful, affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

When I had transcribed and sealed this letter, by her direction, I gave it to the messenger myself, who told me that Miss Howe waited for nothing but his return to set out for London.

Thy servant is just come, so I will close here. Thou art a merciless master. The two fellows are *battered* to death by thee, to use a female word ; and all female words, though we are not sure of their derivation, have very significant meanings. I believe, in their hearts, they wish the angel in the heaven that is ready to receive her and thee at thy proper place, that there might be an end of their *flurries*—another word of the same gender.

What a letter hast thou sent me ! Poor Lovelace ! is all the answer I will return.

Five o'clock.

Colonel Morden has this moment arrived.

(Belford—in continuation.)

Eight o'clock in the evening.

I HAD but just time in my former, to tell you that Colonel Morden was arrived. He was on horseback, attended by two servants, and alighted at the door just as the clock struck five. Mrs. Smith was then below in her back shop, weeping, her husband with her, who was as much affected as she ; Mrs. Lovick having left them a little before, in tears likewise ; for they had been bemoaning one another—joining in opinion, that the admirable lady would not live the night over. She had told them, it was *her* opinion too, from some numbnesses, which she called the forerunners of death, and from an increased inclination to doze.

The Colonel, as Mrs. Smith told me afterwards, asked, with great impatience, the moment he alighted—"How Miss Harlowe was?" she answered—"Alive! but, she feared, drawing on apace." "Good God!" said he, with his hands and eyes lifted up, "Can I see her? My name is Morden; I have the honour to be nearly related to her. Step up, pray, and let her know—she is sensible, I hope—that I am here. Who is with her?"

"Nobody but her nurse and Mrs. Lovick, a widow gentlewoman, who is as careful of her as if she were her mother."

"And *more* careful too," interrupted he, "or she is not careful at all——"

"Except a gentleman be with her, one Mr. Belford," con-

tinued Mrs. Smith, "who has been the best friend she has had."

"If Mr. Belford be with her, surely I may—but, pray, step up, and let Mr. Belford know that I should take it a favour to speak with him first."

Mrs. Smith came up to me in my new apartment. I had but just dispatched your servant, and was asking her nurse if I might be again admitted? who answered, "that she was dozing in the elbow-chair, having refused to lie down," saying, "she should soon, she hoped, lie down for good."

The Colonel, who is really a fine gentleman, received me with great politeness. After the first compliments—"My kinswoman, sir," said he, "is more obliged to you than to any of her own family. For my part, I have been endeavouring to move so many rocks in her favour; and, little thinking the dear creature so very bad, have neglected to attend her, as I ought to have done the moment I arrived; and *would*, had I known how ill she was, and what a task I should have had with the family. But, sir, your friend has been excessively to blame; and you being so *intimately* his friend, has made her fare the worse for your civilities to her. But are there no hopes of her recovery?"

"The doctors have left her, with the melancholy declaration that there are none!"

"Has she had good attendance, sir?—a skilful physician? I hear these good folks have been very civil and obliging to her—?"

"Who could be otherwise?" said Mrs. Smith, weeping; "she is the sweetest lady in the world!"

"The character," said the Colonel, lifting up his eyes and hand, "that she has from every living creature! Good God! How could your accursed friend—"

"And how could her cruel parents?" interrupted I. "We may as easily account for *him* as for them."

"Too true," returned he, "the vileness of the profligates of our sex considered, whenever they can get any of the other into their power."

I satisfied him about the care that had been taken of her; and told him of the friendly and even *paternal* attendance she had had from Dr. H. and Mr. Goddard.

He was impatient to attend her, not having seen her, as he said, since she was twelve years old; and that then she gave promises of being one of the finest women in England.

"She *was* so," replied I, "a very few months ago. And though emaciated, she will appear to you to have confirmed those

promises. For her features are so regular and exact, her proportion so fine, and her manner so inimitably graceful, that were she only skin and bone, she must be a beauty."

Mrs. Smith, at his request, stepped up, and brought us down word that Mrs. Lovick and her nurse were with her, and that she was in so sound a sleep, leaning upon the former in her elbow-chair, that she neither heard her enter the room nor go out. The Colonel begged, if not improper, that he might see her though sleeping. He said, that his impatience would not let him stay till she awaked. Yet he would not have her disturbed; and should be glad to contemplate her sweet features, when she saw not him; and asked if she thought he could not go in and come out without disturbing her?

She believed he might, she answered; for her chair's back was towards the door.

He said, he would take care to withdraw if she awoke, that his sudden appearance might not surprise her.

Mrs. Smith, stepping up before us, bid Mrs. Lovick and the nurse not stir, when we entered. And then we went up softly together.

We beheld the lady in a charming attitude. Dressed, as I told you before, in her virgin white, she was sitting in her elbow-chair, Mrs. Lovick close by her, in another chair, with her left arm round her neck, supporting her, for it seems the lady had bid her do so, saying she had been a mother to her, and she would delight herself in thinking she was in her mamma's arms, for she found herself drowsy. Perhaps, she said, for the last time she should ever be so.

One faded cheek rested upon the good woman's bosom, the kindly warmth of which had overspread it with a faint but charming flush! the other paler and hollow, as if already iced over by death. Her hands white as the lily, with her meandering veins more transparently blue than ever I had seen even hers (veins so soon, alas! to be choked up by the congelment of that purple stream which already creeps rather than flows through them); her hands hanging lifelessly, one before her, the other grasped by the right hand of the kind widow, whose tears bedewed the sweet face which her motherly bosom supported, though unfelt by the fair sleeper; and, either insensibly to the good woman, or what she would not disturb her to wipe off, or to change her posture. Her aspect was sweetly calm and serene; and though she started now and then, yet her sleep

seemed easy ; her breath, indeed, short and quick, but tolerably free, and not like that of a dying person.

In this heart-moving attitude she appeared to us when we approached her, and came to have her lovely face before us.

The Colonel, sighing often, gazed upon her with his arms folded, and with the most profound and affectionate attention, till at last, on her starting, and fetching her breath with greater difficulty than before, he retired to a screen that was drawn before her *house*, as she calls it, which, as I have heretofore observed, stands under one of the windows. This screen was placed there at the time she found herself obliged to take to her chamber ; and in the depth of our concern, and the fulness of other discourse at our first interview, I had forgotten to apprise the Colonel of what he would probably see.

Retiring thither, he drew out his handkerchief, and, overwhelmed with grief, seemed unable to speak. But, on casting his eye behind the screen, he soon broke silence ; for, struck with the shape of the coffin, he lifted up a purplish-coloured cloth that was spread over it, and, starting back, "Good God," said he, "what's here ?"

Mrs. Smith, standing next him. "Why," said he, with great emotion, "is my cousin suffered to indulge her sad reflections with such an object before her ?"

"Alas ! sir," replied the good woman, "who should control her ? We are all strangers about her, in a manner ; and yet we have expostulated with her upon this sad occasion."

"I ought," said I, stepping softly up to him—the lady again falling into a doze, "to have apprised you of this. I was here when it was brought in, and never was so shocked in my life. But she had none of her friends about her, and no reason to hope for any of them to come near her ; and, assured she should not recover, she was resolved to leave as little as possible, especially as to what related to her person, to her executor. But it is not a shocking object to her, though it be to everybody else."

"Curse upon the hard-heartedness of those," said he, "who occasioned her to make so sad a provision for herself ! What must her reflections have been, all the time she was thinking of it, and giving orders about it ? And what must they be, every time she turns her head towards it ? These uncommon geniuses—but indeed she *should* have been controlled in it, had I been here."

The lady fetched a profound sigh, and starting, it broke

off our talk, and the Colonel then withdrew farther behind the screen, that his sudden appearance might not surprise her.

"Where am I?" said she. "How drowsy I am! How long have I dozed? Don't go, sir" (for I was retiring). I am very stupid, and shall be more and more so, I suppose."

She then offered to raise herself; but, being ready to faint through weakness, was forced to sit down again, reclining her head on her chair back; and, after a few moments, "I believe now, my good friends," said she, "all your kind trouble will soon be over. I have slept, but am not refreshed, and my fingers' ends seem numbed—have no feeling" (holding them up). "'Tis time to send the letter to my good Norton."

"Shall I, madam, send my servant post with it?"

"O no, sir, I thank you. It will reach the dear woman too soon—as she will think—by the post."

I told her this was not post day.

"Is it Wednesday still?" said she. "Bless me! I know not how the time goes, but very tediously, 'tis plain. And now I think I must soon take to my bed. All will be most conveniently and with least trouble, over there, will it not, Mrs. Lovick? I think, sir," turning to me, "I have left nothing to these last incapacitating hours. Nothing either to say or to do. I bless God I have not. If I *had*, how unhappy should I be. Can you, sir, remind me of anything necessary to be done or said to make your office easy?"

"If, madam, your cousin Morden should come, you would be glad to see him, I presume?"

"I am too weak to wish to see my cousin now. It would but discompose me, and him too. Yet, if he come while I *can* see, I *will* see him, were it but to thank him for former favours, and for his present kind intentions to me. Has anybody been here from him?"

"He has called, and will be here madam in half an hour, but he feared to surprise you."

"Nothing can surprise me now, except my mamma were to favour me with her last blessing in person. That would be a welcome surprise to me even yet. But did my cousin come purposely to town to see me?"

"Yes, madam. I took the liberty to let him know by a line last Monday how ill you were."

"You are very kind, sir. I am, and have been, greatly obliged to you. But I think I shall be pained to see him now, because he will be concerned to see me. And yet, as I

am not so ill as I shall presently be, the sooner he comes the better. But if he come, what shall I do about that screen? He will chide me, very probably; and I cannot bear chiding now. Perhaps," leaning upon Mrs. Lovick and Mrs. Smith, "I can walk into the next apartment to receive him."

She motioned to rise, but was ready to faint again, and forced to sit still.

The Colonel was in a perfect agitation behind the screen to hear this discourse, and twice, unseen by his cousin, was coming from it towards her, but retreated for fear of surprising her too much.

I stepped to him, and favoured his retreat, she only saying, "Are you going, Mr. Belford? Are you sent for down? Is my cousin come?" for she heard somebody step softly across the room, and thought it to be me, her hearing being more perfect than her sight.

I told her I believed he was, and she said, "We must make the best of it, Mrs. Lovick and Mrs. Smith. I shall otherwise most grievously shock my poor cousin, for he loved me dearly once. Pray give me a few of the doctor's last drops in water to keep up my spirits for this one interview; and that is all, I believe, that can concern me now."

The Colonel, who heard all this, sent in his name; and I, pretending to go down to him, introduced the afflicted gentleman, she having first ordered the screen to be put as close to the window as possible that he might not see, what was behind it, while he, having heard what she had said about it, was determined to take no notice of it.

He folded the angel in his arms as she sat, dropping down on one knee, for, supporting herself upon the two elbows of the chair, she attempted to rise, but could not.

"Excuse, my dear cousin," said she, "excuse me, that I cannot stand up. I did not expect this favour now. But I am glad of this opportunity to thank you for all your generous goodness to me."

"I never, my best beloved and dearest cousin," said he, with eyes running over, "shall forgive myself that I did not attend you sooner. Little did I think you were so ill, nor do any of your friends believe it. If they did——"

"*If they did,*" repeated she, interrupting him, "I should have had more compassion from them. I am sure I should. But pray, sir, how did you leave them? Are *you* reconciled to them? If you are not, I beg, if you love your poor Clarissa,

that you will, for every widened difference augments but my fault, since *that* is the foundation of all."

"I had been expecting to hear from them in your favour, my dear cousin," said he, "for some hours, when this gentleman's letter arrived, which hastened me up; but I have the account of your grandfather's estate to make up with you, and have bills and draughts upon their banker for the sums due to you, which they desire you may receive, lest you should have occasion for money. And this is such an earnest of an approaching reconciliation that I dare to answer for all the rest being according to your wishes, if——"

* * * *

"Ah! sir," interrupted she, with frequent breaks and pauses, "I wish, I wish, this does not rather show, that were I to live, they would have nothing more to say to me. I never had any pride in being independent of them. All my actions, when I might have made myself *more* independent, show this. But what avail these reflections now? I only beg, sir, that you, and this gentleman—to whom I am exceedingly obliged—will adjust those matters, according to the will I have written. Mr. Belford will excuse me; but it was in truth more necessity than choice, that made me think of giving him the trouble he so kindly accepts. Had I had the happiness to see you, my cousin, sooner, or to know that you still honoured me with your regard, I should not have had the assurance to ask this favour of *him*. But, though the friend of Mr. Lovelace, he is a man of honour, and he will make peace rather than break it. And, my dear cousin, let me beg of you to contribute your part to it; and remember, that, while I have nearer relations than my cousin Morden, dear as you are, and always were to me, you have no title to avenge my wrongs upon him who has been the occasion of them. But I wrote to you my mind on this subject, and my reasons; and hope I need not further urge them."

"I must do Mr. Lovelace so much justice," answered he, wiping his eyes, "as to witness how sincerely he repents him of his ungrateful baseness to you, and how ready he is to make you all the amends in his power. He owns *his* wickedness and *your* merit. If he did not, I could not pass it over, though you *have* nearer relations. For, my dear cousin, did not your grandfather leave me in trust for you? And should I think myself concerned for your fortune, and not for your honour? But, since he is so desirous to do

you justice, I have the less to say ; and you may make yourself entirely easy on that account."

"I thank you, thank you, sir," said she. "All is now as I wished ; but I am very faint, very weak. I am sorry I cannot hold up ; that I cannot better deserve the honour of this visit ; but it will not be." And, saying this, she sunk down in her chair, and was silent.

Hereupon we both withdrew, leaving word that we would be at the "Bedford Head," if anything extraordinary happened.

We bespoke a little repast, having neither of us dined, and, while it was getting ready, you may guess at the subject of our discourse. Both joined in lamentation for the lady's desperate state ; admired her manifold excellencies ; severely condemned you and her friends. Yet to bring him into better opinion of you, I read to him some passages from your last letters, which showed your concern for the wrongs you had done her, and your deep remorse ; and he said it was a dreadful thing to labour under the sense of a guilt so irremediable.

We procured Mr. Goddard once more to visit her, and to call upon us in his return. He was so good as to do so ; but he tarried with her not five minutes ; and told us that she was drawing on apace ; that he feared she would not live till morning ; and that she wished to see Colonel Morden directly.

The Colonel made excuses where none were needed ; and though our little refection was just brought in, he went away immediately.

I could not touch a morsel ; and took pen and ink to amuse myself and oblige you, knowing how impatient you would be for a few lines ; for, from what I have recited, you will see it was impossible I could withdraw to write, when your servant came at half an hour after five, or have an opportunity for it till now ; and *this* is accidental : and yet your poor fellow was afraid to go away with the verbal message I sent ; importing, as no doubt he told you, that the Colonel was with us, the lady excessively ill, and that I could not stir to write a line.

Ten o'clock.

THE Colonel sent to me afterwards, to tell me that the lady having been in convulsions, he was so much disordered that he could not possibly attend me.

I have sent every half-hour to know how she does ; and

just now I have the pleasure to hear that her convulsions have left her, and that she is gone to rest in a much quieter way than could be expected.

Her poor cousin is very much indisposed, yet will not stir out of the house while she is in such a way, but intends to lie down on a couch, having refused any other accommodation.

(Belford—in continuation.)

Soho, *September 7th, 6 o'clock.*

THE lady is still alive. The Colonel having just sent his servant to let me know that she inquired after me about an hour ago, I am dressing to attend her. Joel begs of me to dispatch him back, though but with one line to gratify your present impatience. He expects, he says, to find you at Knightsbridge, let him make what haste he can back, and if he has not a line or two to pacify you, he is afraid you will pistol him, for he apprehends that you are hardly yourself. I therefore despatch this, and will have another ready as soon as I can, with particulars. But you must have a little patience, for how can I withdraw every half-hour to write, if I am admitted to the lady's presence, or if I am with the Colonel?

Smith's, *8 o'clock in the morning.*

THE lady is in a slumber. Mrs. Lovick, who sat up with her, says she had a better night than was expected; for although she slept little, she seemed easy, and the easier for the pious frame she was in; all her waking moments being taken up in devotion, or in an ejaculatory silence; her hands and eyes often lifted up, and her lips moving with a fervour worthy of these her last hours.

Ten o'clock.

THE Colonel being earnest to see his cousin as soon as she awoke, we were both admitted. We observed in her, as soon as we entered, strong symptoms of her approaching dissolution, notwithstanding what the women had flattered us with from her last night's tranquillity. The Colonel and I, each loth to say what we thought, looked upon one another with melancholy countenances.

The Colonel told her he should send a servant to her uncle Antony's for some papers he had left there, and asked if she had any commands that way?

"She thought not," she said, speaking more inwardly

than she did the day before. "She had indeed a letter ready to be sent to her good Norton, and there was a request intimated in it: but it was time enough, if the request were signified to those whom it concerned when all was over. However, it might be sent then by the servant who was going that way." And she caused it to be given to the Colonel for that purpose.

Her breath being very short, she desired another pillow. and sat up in her bed. She spoke then with more distinctness; and seeing us greatly concerned, forgot her own sufferings, to comfort us; and a charming lecture she gave us, though a brief one, upon the happiness of a timely preparation and the hazards of a late repentance.

* * * *

"I beseech ye, my good friends," proceeded she, "mourn not for one who mourns not, nor has cause to mourn for herself. On the contrary, rejoice with me, that all my worldly troubles are so near their end. Believe me, sirs, that I would not, if I might, choose to live, although the pleasantest part of my life were to come over again; and yet *eighteen years of it*, out of *nineteen*, have been *very* pleasant. To be so much exposed to temptation, and to be so liable to fail in the trial, who would not rejoice that all her dangers are over? All I wished was pardon and blessing from my parents. Easy as my departure seems to promise to be, it would have been still easier, had I had that pleasure. But God Almighty would not let me depend for comfort upon any but Himself."

She then repeated her request, in the most earnest manner, to her cousin, that he would not *heighten* her fault by seeking to avenge her death; to me, that I would endeavour to make up all breaches, and use the power I had with my friend, to prevent all future mischiefs *from* him, as well as that which this trust might give me, to prevent any *to* him.

She made some excuses to her cousin, for having not been able to alter her will, to join him in the executorship with me; and to *me*, for the trouble she had given, and yet should give me.

She had fatigued herself so much, growing sensibly weaker, that she sunk her head upon her pillows, ready to faint; and we withdrew to the window, looking upon one another; but could not tell what to say; and yet both seemed inclinable to speak; but the motion passed over in silence. Our eyes only spoke, and that in a manner neither's were used to; mine, at least, not till I knew this admirable creature.

The Colonel withdrew to dismiss his messenger, and send away the letter to Mrs. Norton. I took the opportunity to retire likewise, and to write thus far; and Joel returning to take it, I now close here.

Eleven o'clock.

(Belford—in continuation.)

THE Colonel tells me that he has written to Mr. John Harlowe, by his servant, "that they might spare themselves the trouble of debating about a reconciliation; for that his dear cousin would probably be no more before they could resolve."

He asked me after his cousin's means of subsisting; and whether she had accepted of any favour from *me*. He was sure, he said, she would not from *you*.

I acquainted him with the truth of her parting with some of her apparel.

This wrung his heart; and bitterly did he exclaim as well against you, as against her implacable relations.

He wished he had not come to England at all, or had come sooner; and hoped I would apprise him of the whole mournful story at a proper season. He added, that he had thoughts when he came over, of fixing here for the remainder of his days; but now, as it was impossible his cousin could recover, he would go abroad again, and resettle himself at Florence or Leghorn.

* * * *

The lady has been giving orders, with great presence of mind, about her body, directing her nurse and the maid of the house to put her into her coffin as soon as she is cold. Mr. Belford, she said, would know the rest by her will.

* * * *

She has just now given from her bosom, where she always wore it, a miniature picture set in gold of Miss Howe. She gave it to Mrs. Lovick, desiring her to fold it up in white paper, and direct it *To Charles Hickman, Esq.*, and to give it to me, when she was departed, for that gentleman.

She looked upon the picture, before she gave it her—"Sweet and ever-amiable friend—companion—sister—lover!" said she, and kissed it four several times, once at each tender appellation.

* * * *

Your other servant is come. Well may you be impatient! Well may you! But do you think I can leave off in the

middle of a conversation, to run and set down what offers, and send it away piecemeal as I write? If I *could*, must I not lose one half, while I put down the other?

This event is nearly as interesting to *me* as it is to *you*. If you are more grieved than I, there can be but one reason for it; and that's at your heart! I had rather lose all the friends I have in the world (yourself in the number) than this divine lady; and shall be unhappy whenever I think of her sufferings and of her merit; though I have nothing to reproach myself by reason of the former.

I say not this, just now, so much to reflect upon you, as to express my own grief; though your conscience, I suppose, will make you think otherwise.

Your poor fellow, who says that he begs for *his life* in desiring to be dispatched back with a letter, tears this from me. Else perhaps (for I am just sent for down) a quarter of an hour would make you—not *easy* indeed—but *certain*; and that, in a *state* like yours, to a *mind* like yours, is a relief.

Thursday afternoon, 4 o'clock.

(Mr. Belford to Richard Mowbray, Esq.)

Thursday afternoon.

DEAR MOWBRAY,

I AM glad to hear you are in town. Throw yourself the moment this comes to your hand (if possible with Tourville) in the way the man who least of all men deserves the love of the worthy heart; but most that of thine and Tourville: else, the news I shall most probably send him within an hour or two, will make annihilation the greatest blessing he has to wish for.

You will find him between Piccadilly and Kensington, most probably on horseback, riding backwards and forwards in a crazy way; or put up, perhaps, at some inn or tavern in the way; a waiter possibly, if so, watching for his servant's return to him from me.

* * * *

His man Will is just come to me. He will carry this to you in his way back, and be your director. Hie away in a coach, or anyhow. Your being with him may save either his or a servant's life. See the blessed effects of triumphant libertinism! Sooner or later it comes home to us, and all concludes in gall and bitterness!

Adieu. J. BELFORD.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

CURSE upon the Colonel, and curse upon the writer of the last letter I received, and upon all the world! Thou to pretend to be as much interested in my Clarissa's fate as myself! 'Tis well for one of us, that this was not said to me, instead of written. Living or dying, she is mine—and only mine. Have I not earned her dearly? Is not damnation likely to be the purchase to me, though a happy eternity will be hers?

An eternal separation! O God! O God! How can I bear that thought! But yet there is life! Yet, therefore, hope. Enlarge my hope, and thou shalt be my good genius, and I will forgive thee everything.

For this last time—but it must not, shall not, be the *last*—let me hear, the moment thou receivest this—what I *am* to be—for at present, I am THE MOST MISERABLE OF MEN.

Rose at Knightsbridge, 5 o'clock.

My fellow tells me that thou art sending Mowbray and Tourville to me. I want them not. My soul's sick of them, and of all the world; but most of myself. Yet, as they send me word they will come to me immediately, I will wait for them, and for thy next. O Belford! let it not be; but hasten it, hasten it, be what it may!

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Thursday evening, 7 o'clock, September 7th.

I HAVE only to say at present, thou wilt do well to take a tour to Paris; or wherever else thy destiny shall lead thee!!!—

JOHN BELFORD.

(Mr. Mowbray to Belford.)

Uxbridge, September 7th, between 11 and 12 at night.

DEAR JACK,

I SEND, by poor Lovelace's desire, for *particulars* of the fatal breviate thou sentest him this night. He cannot bear to set pen to paper, yet wants to know every minute passage of Miss Harlowe's departure. Yet why he should, I cannot see; for if she is gone, she is gone; and who can help it?

I never heard of such a woman in my life. What great matters has she suffered, that grief should kill her thus?

I wish the poor fellow had never known her. From first

to last, what trouble has she cost him! The charming fellow has been half lost to us ever since he pursued her. And what is there in one woman more than another, for matter of that?

It was well we were with him when your note came. You showed your true friendship in your foresight. Why, Jack, the poor fellow was quite beside himself—mad as any man ever was in Bedlam.

Will brought him the letter just after we had joined him at the “Bohemia Head;” where he had left word at the “Rose,” at Knightsbridge, he should be; for he had been sauntering up and down, backwards and forwards, expecting us, and his fellow. Will, as soon as he delivered it, got out of his way; and when he opened it, never was such a piece of scenery. He trembled like a devil at receiving it—fumbled at the seal, his fingers in a palsy, like Tom Doleman’s; his hand shake, shake, shake, that he tore the letter in two before he could come at the contents. And when he had read them, off went his hat to one corner of the room, his wig to the other. “Damnation seize the world!” and a whole volley of such-like *execrations* wishes; running up and down the room, and throwing up the sash, and pulling it down, and smiting his forehead with his double fist, and stamping and tearing, that the landlord ran in, and faster out again. And this was the *distraction-scene* for some time.

In vain was all Jemmy or I could say to him. I offered once to take hold of his hands, because he was going to do himself a mischief, as I believed, looking about for his pistols, which he had laid upon the table, but which Will, unseen, had taken out with him. A faithful, honest dog that Will. I shall for ever love the fellow for it—and he hit me a blow that made my nose bleed. ’Twas well ’twas he: for I hardly knew how to take it.

Jemmy raved at him, and told him how wicked it was in him to be so brutish to abuse a friend, and run mad for a woman. And then he said he was sorry for it; and then Will ventured in with water and a towel; and the dog rejoiced, as I could see by his looks, that I *had it* rather than he.

And so, by degrees, we brought him a little to his reason, and he promised to behave more like a man. And so I forgave him. And we rode on in the dark to *here* at Doleman’s; and we all tried to shame him out of his mad ungovernable foolishness; for we told him as how she was

but a woman, and an obstinate perverse woman too : and how could he help it ?

And you know, Jack (as we told him, moreover), that it was a shame for a man like him to give himself such *obstrepulous* airs because she would die ; . . . and then what was there in one woman more than another ? And thus we comforted him and advised him.

But yet he runs upon this lady as much now she's dead as he did when she was living. For I suppose, Jack, it is no joke ; she is certainly and *bonâ fide* dead, isn't she ? If not, thou deservest to be damned for thy fooling, I tell thee that. So he will have me write for particulars of her *departure*.

He won't bear the word *dead* on any account. A squeamish puppy ! How love unmans and softens ! And such a *noble* fellow as this too ! I have no patience with the foolish dog — upon my soul I have not !

So send the account, and let him howl over it, as I suppose he will.

But he must and shall go abroad. And in a month or two Jemmy and you and I will join him, and he'll soon get the better of this chicken-hearted folly, never fear, and will then be ashamed of himself. And then we'll not spare him ; though *now*, poor fellow, it were pity to *lay on him so thick* as he deserves. And do thou, till then, spare all reflections upon him ; for, it seems, thou hast *worried him* unmercifully.

I was willing to give thee some account of the hand we have had with the tearing fellow, who had certainly been a lost man, had we not been with him ; or he would have killed somebody or other. And *now* he is but very middling ; curses and swears, and is confounded gloomy ; and creeps into holes and corners, like an old hedgehog. . . . And so adieu, Jack. Tourville and all of us wish for thee ; for no one has the influence upon him that thou hast.

R. MOWBRAY.

As I promised him that I would write for the particulars abovesaid, I write this after all are gone to bed ; and the fellow is to set out with it by daybreak.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Thursday night.

I MAY as well try to write ; since, were I to go to bed, I should not sleep. I never had such a weight of grief upon

my mind in my life, as upon the demise of this admirable woman, whose soul is now rejoicing in the regions of light.

You may be glad to know the particulars of her happy exit. I will try to proceed, for all is hushed and still; the family retired, but not one of them, and least of all her poor cousin, I dare say, to rest.

At four o'clock, as I mentioned in my last, I was sent for down; and, as thou usedst to like my descriptions, I will give thee the woeful scene that presented itself to me as I approached the bed.

The Colonel was the first that took my attention, kneeling on the side of the bed, the lady's right hand in both his, which his face covered, bathing it with his tears; although she had been comforting him, as the women since told me, in elevated strains but broken accents.

On the other side of the bed sat the good widow, her face overwhelmed with tears, leaning her head against the bed's head in a most disconsolate manner; and turning her face to me as soon as she saw me, "O, Mr. Belford," cried she, with folded hands, "the dear lady"—A heavy sob permitted her not to say more.

Mrs. Smith, with clasped fingers and uplifted eyes, as if imploring help from the only Power which could give it, was kneeling down at the bed's feet, tears in large drops trickling down her cheeks.

Her nurse was kneeling between the widow and Mrs. Smith, her arms extended. In one hand she held an ineffectual cordial, which she had just been offering to her dying mistress. Her face was swollen with weeping, though used to such scenes as this, and she turned her eyes towards me, as if she called upon me by them to join in the helpless sorrow, a fresh stream bursting from them as I approached the bed.

The maid of the house, with her face upon her folded arms, as she stood leaning against the wainscot, more audibly expressed her grief than any of the others.

The lady had been silent a few minutes, and speechless, as they thought, moving her lips without uttering a word; one hand, as I said, in her cousin's. But when Mrs. Lovick on my approach pronounced my name, "Oh! Mr. Belford," said she, with a faint inward voice, but very distinct nevertheless—"Now!—Now! [in broken periods she spoke] I bless God for his mercies to his poor creature—will all soon be over—A few—a very few moments—will end this strife—and I shall be happy!"

"Comfort here, sir," turning her head to the Colonel; "comfort my cousin, see!—the blame—able kindness—he would not wish me to be happy—so soon!"

Here she stopped for two or three minutes, earnestly looking upon him. Then resuming, "My dearest cousin," said she, "be comforted—what is dying but the common lot? The mortal frame may *seem* to labour, but that is all! It is not so hard to die as I believed it to be! The preparation is the difficulty—I bless God I have had time for that—the rest is worse to beholders than to me! I am all blessed hope—hope itself!"

She *looked* what she said, a sweet smile beaming over her countenance.

* * * *

"Once more, my dear cousin," said she, but still in broken accents, "commend me most dutifully to my father and mother"—there she stopped.—and then proceeding, "to my sister, to my brother, to my uncles, and tell them I bless them with my parting breath—for all their goodness to me—even for their displeasure I bless them—most happy has been to me my punishment *here*! Happy indeed!"

* * * *

She was silent for a few moments, lifting up her eyes, and the hand her cousin held not between his. Then, "*O death!*" said she, "*where is thy sting!*" [The words I remember to have heard in the Burial Service read over my uncle and poor Belton.] And after a pause, "*It is good for me that I was afflicted!*" Words of scripture, I suppose.

Then turning towards us, who were lost in speechless sorrow. "O dear, dear gentlemen," said she, "you know not what *foretastes*, what *assurances*——" And there she again stopped and looked up, as if in a thankful rapture, sweetly smiling.

Then turning her head towards me, "Do *you*, sir, tell your friend that I forgive him! and I pray to God to forgive him!" Again pausing, and lifting up her eyes as if praying that He would. "Let him know how happily I die—and that such as my own, I wish to be his last hour."

She was again silent for a few moments; and then resuming, "My sight fails me! Your voices only——" for we both spoke together of her Christian, her divine frame, in accents as broken as her own; and the voice of grief is alike in all. "Is not this Mr. Morden's hand?" pressing one of his with that he had just let go. "Which is Mr. Belford's?"

holding out the other. I gave her mine. "God Almighty bless you both," said she, "and make you both, in your last hour,—for you *must* come to this, happy as I am."

* * * *

Her breath grew shorter. After a few minutes, "And now, my dearest cousin, give me your hand, nearer, still nearer, drawing it towards her; and she pressed it with her dying lips. "God protect you, dear, dear sir, and once more, receive my best and most grateful thanks; and tell my dear Miss Howe, and vouchsafe to see, and to tell my worthy Norton—she will be one day, I fear not, though now lowly in her fortunes, a saint in heaven. Tell them both that I remember them with thankful blessings in my last moments! And pray God to give them happiness *here* for many, many years, for the sake of their friends and lovers; and a heavenly crown *hereafter*; and such assurance of it as I have, through the all-satisfying merits of my blessed Redeemer."

* * * *

Her sweet voice and broken periods methinks still fill my ears, and never will be out of my memory.

After a short silence, in a more broken and faint accent, "And you, Mr. Belford," pressing my hand, "may God preserve you, and make you sensible of all your errors. You see in me how all ends, may *you* be——" And down sunk her head upon her pillow, she fainting away, and drawing from us her hands.

We thought she was gone; and each gave way to a violent burst of grief.

But soon showing signs of returning life, our attention was again engaged; and I besought her, when a little recovered, to complete in my favour her half-pronounced blessing. She waved her hand to us both, and bowed her head several times, evidently desirous to distinguish every person present, not forgetting the nurse and the maid-servant; the latter having approached the bed, weeping, as if crowding in for the divine lady's last blessing; and she spoke faltering and inwardly. "Bless—bless—bless—you all. And now—and now"—holding up her almost lifeless hands for the last time—"come—O come—Blessed Lord—JESUS!"

And with these words, the last but a whisper, expired; such a smile, such a charming serenity overspreading her sweet face at the instant, as seemed to manifest her eternal happiness, already begun.

Oh, Lovelace; but I can write no more!

* * * *

I resume my pen to add a few lines.

While warm, though pulseless, we pressed each her hand with our lips, and then retired into the next room.

We looked at each other, with intent to speak. But both deeply affected as by one common cause, we turned away in silence.

* * * *

The Colonel sighed as if his heart would burst. At last, his face and hands uplifted, his back towards me: "Good heaven," said he to himself, "support me! And is it thus, oh flower of nature? And must we no more, *never more*, my blessed, blessed cousin!" uttering some other words, which his sighs made inarticulate. Then, recollecting himself—"Forgive me, sir! Excuse me, Mr. Belford." And, sliding by me—"Anon I hope to see you, sir." And downstairs he went, and out of the house, leaving me a statue.

When I recovered, I was ready to repine at what I *then* called an unequal dispensation, forgetting her happy preparation, and still happier departure; and that she had but drawn a common lot, triumphing in it, and leaving behind her, every one less assured of happiness, though equally certain that the lot would one day be their own.

She departed exactly at forty minutes after six o'clock, as by her watch on the table.

And thus died Miss Clarissa Harlowe, in the blossom of her youth and beauty, who, her tender years considered, has not left behind her her superior in extensive knowledge and watchful prudence, nor hardly her equal for unblemished virtue, exemplary piety, sweetness of manners, discreet generosity, and true Christian charity. And these all set off by the most graceful modesty and humility, yet on all proper occasions manifesting a noble presence of mind and true magnanimity, so that she may be said to have been not only an ornament to her sex, but to human nature.

A better pen than mine may do her fuller justice. Thine, I mean, O Lovelace! for well dost thou know how much she excelled in the graces both of mind and person, natural and acquired, all that is woman. And thou also canst best account for the causes of her immature death, through those calamities which, in so short a space of time, from the highest pitch of felicity (every one in a manner adoring her), brought her to an early death so happy for herself, but so much to be deplored by all who had the honour of her acquaintance.

This task, then, I leave to thee.

But now I can write no more, only that I am a sympathizer in every part of thy distress, except (and yet it seems cruel to say it) in that which arises from thy guilt.

1 o'clock, Friday morning.

J. B.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Friday morning, 9 o'clock.

I HAVE no opportunity to write at length, having necessary orders to give on the melancholy occasion. Joel, who got to me by six in the morning, and whom I dispatched instantly back with the letter I had ready last night, gives me but an indifferent account of the state of your mind. I wonder not at it. But time (and nothing else can) will make it easier to you, if you have compounded with your conscience, else it may be heavier every day than another.

* * * *

Tourville tells me what a way you are in. I hope you will not think of coming hither. The lady in her will desires you may not see her. Four copies are making of it. It is a long one, for she gives her reasons for all she wills. I will write to you more particularly as soon as possibly I can.

* * * *

Three letters are just brought by a servant in livery, directed *To Miss Clarissa Harlowe*. I will send copies of them to you. The contents are enough to make one mad. How would this poor lady have rejoiced to receive them? And yet, if she had, she would not have been enabled to say, as she nobly did, "That God would not let her depend for comfort upon any but Himself;" and, indeed, for some days past she had seemed to have got above all worldly considerations; her *fervent love, even for her Miss Howe*, as she acknowledged, having given way to *supreme fervours*.

(Mrs. Norton to Clarissa.)

Wednesday, September 6th.

At length, my best beloved Miss Clary, everything is in the wished train, for all your relations are unanimous in your favour. Even your brother and sister are with the foremost to be reconciled to you.*

* It is important to observe that this wonderful change in the "Harlowe-hearted" family did not take place till Colonel Morden had entered on his duties as trustee, and taken over accounts, money-bills, &c.—ED.

I knew it must end thus! By patience and persevering sweetness, what a triumph have you gained!

This happy change is owing to letters received from your physician, from your cousin Morden, and from others.

Colonel Morden will be with you no doubt before this can reach you, with his pocket-book filled with money-bills, that nothing may be wanting to make you easy.

And now all our hopes, all our prayers are, that this good news may restore you to spirits and health, and that—so long withheld—it may not come too late.

I know how much your dutiful heart will be raised with the joyful tidings I write you, and still shall more particularly tell you of, when I have the happiness to see you, which will be by next Saturday at farthest, perhaps on Friday afternoon, by the time you can receive this.

For this day, being sent for by the general voice, I was received by every one with great goodness and condescension, and *entreated*, for that was the word they were pleased to use, when I needed no entreaty I am sure, to hasten up to you, and to assure you of all their affectionate regards to you. And your father bid me say all the kind things that were in my heart to say, in order to comfort and raise you up, and they would hold themselves bound to make them good.

How agreeable is this commission to your Norton! My heart will overflow with kind speeches, never fear. I am already meditating what I shall say to cheer and raise you up in the names of every one dear and near to you. And sorry I am that I cannot this moment set out, as I might, instead of writing, would they favour my eager impatience with their chariot, but as it was not offered, it would be presumption to have asked for it. And to-morrow a hired chaise and pair will be ready, but at what hour I know not.

How I long once more to fold my dear, precious young lady to my fond maternal bosom!

Your sister will write to you and send her letter with this by a particular hand.

I must not let them see what I write, because of my wish about the chariot.

Your uncle Harlowe will also write, and I doubt not in the kindest terms; for they are all extremely alarmed and troubled at the dangerous way your doctor represents you to be in; as well as delighted with the character he gives you. Would to heaven the good gentleman had written *sooner*! And yet he writes that you know not he has *now*

written. But it is all our confidence and our consolation that he would not have written at all, had he thought it too late.

They will prescribe no conditions to you, my dear young lady, but will leave all to your own duty and discretion. Only your brother and sister declare they will never yield to call Mr. Lovelace brother. Nor will your father, I believe, be easily brought to think of him for a son.

I am to bring you down with me as soon as your health and inclination will permit. You will be received with open arms. Every one longs to see you. All the servants please themselves, that they shall be permitted to kiss your hands. The pert Betty's note is already changed, and she now runs over in your just praises. What friends does prosperity make! What enemies adversity! It always was and always will be so in every state of life, from the throne to the cottage. But let all be forgotten now on this jubilee change. And may you, my dearest miss, be capable of rejoicing in this good news, as I know you *will* rejoice, if capable of anything.

God preserve you to our happy meeting! And I will, if I may say so, weary Heaven with my incessant prayers to preserve and restore you afterwards.

I need not say how much I am, my dear young lady,

Your ever affectionate and devoted

JUDITH NORTON.

An unhappy delay as to the chaise will make it Saturday morning before I can fold you to my fond heart.

(Miss Arabella Harlowe to Clarissa.)

Wednesday morning, September 6th.

DEAR SISTER,

WE have just heard that you are exceedingly ill. We all loved you as never young creature was loved. You are sensible of that, sister Clary. And you have been very naughty; but we could not be angry always.

We are indeed more afflicted with the news of your being so very ill than I can express; for I see not but, after this separation, as we understand that your misfortune has been greater than your fault, and that, however unhappy, you have demeaned yourself like the good young creature you used to be, we shall love you better, if possible, than ever.

Take comfort therefore, sister Clary, and don't be too much

cast down. Whatever your mortifications may be from such noble prospects overclouded, and from the reflections you will have from *within*, on your faulty step, and from the sully of such a charming character by it, you will receive none from any of us. And as an earnest of your papa's and mamma's favour and reconciliation, they assure you by me of their blessing and hourly prayers.

If it will be any comfort to you, and my mother finds this letter is received as we expect, which we shall know by the good effect it will have upon your health, she will herself go to town to you. Meantime, the good woman you so dearly love will be hastened up to you, and she writes by this opportunity to acquaint you of it and of all our returning love.

I hope you'll rejoice at this good news. Pray let us hear that you do. Your next grateful letter on this occasion, especially if it gives us the pleasure of hearing you are better upon this news, will be received with the same (if not greater) delight, than we used to have in all your prettily-penned epistles. Adieu, my dear Clary! I am

Your loving sister, and true friend,

ARABELLA HARLOWE.

(From Mr. John Harlowe to his dear niece, Miss Clarissa Harlowe.)

Wednesday, September 6th.

WE were greatly grieved, my beloved Miss Clary, at your fault; but we are still more, if possible, to hear you are so very ill; and we are sorry things have been carried so far.

We know your talents, my dear, and how movingly you could write whenever you pleased; so that nobody could ever deny you anything; and, believing you depended on your pen, and little thinking you were so ill, and that you had lived so regular a life, and were so truly penitent, are much troubled, every one of us, your brother and all, for being so severe. Forgive my part in it, my dearest Clary. I am your *second papa*, you know. And you *used* to love me.

I hope you'll soon be able to come down, and, after a while, when your indulgent parents can spare you, that you will come to me for a whole month, and rejoice my heart, as you used to do. But if, through illness, you cannot so soon come down as we wish, I will go up to you; for I long to see you. I never more longed to see you in my life, and you were always the darling of my heart, you know.

My brother Antony desires his hearty commendations to you, and joins with me in the tenderest assurance that all shall be well, and, if possible, better than ever; for we now have been so long without you that we know the miss of you, and even hunger and thirst, as I may say, to see you, and to take you once more to our hearts; whence, indeed, you were never banished so far as our concern for the unhappy step made *us* think and *you* believe you were. Your sister and brother both talk of seeing you in town; so does my dear sister, your indulgent mother.

God restore your health—if it be his will, else I know not what will become of

Your truly loving uncle, and second papa,
JOHN HARLOWE.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Friday night, September 8th, past 10.

I WILL now take up the account of our proceedings from my letter of last night, which contained the dying words of this incomparable lady.

As soon as we had seen the last scene closed (so blessedly for herself), we left the body to the care of the good women, who, according to the orders she had given them that very night, removed her into that last house which she had displayed so much fortitude in providing.

In the morning, between seven and eight o'clock, according to appointment, the Colonel came to me here. He was very much indisposed. We went together, accompanied by Mrs. Lovick and Mrs. Smith, into the deceased's chamber. We could not help taking a view of the lovely corpse, and admiring the charming serenity of her noble aspect. The women declared they never saw death so lovely before, and that she looked as if in an easy slumber, the colour having not quite left her cheeks and lips.

I unlocked the drawer, in which (as I mentioned in a former letter) she had deposited her papers. I told you in mine of Monday last, that she had the night before sealed up with three black seals a parcel inscribed—*As soon as I am certainly dead, this to be broke open by Mr. Belford*. I accused myself for having not done it overnight. But really I was then incapable of anything.

I broke it open accordingly, and found in it no less than eleven letters, each sealed with her own seal and black wax, one of which was directed to me.

I will enclose a copy of it.

(To Mr. Belford.)

Sunday evening, September 3rd.

SIR,

I TAKE this last and solemn occasion to repeat to you my thanks for all your kindness to me at a time when I most needed countenance and protection.

A few considerations I beg leave, as *now* at your perusal of this, from the dead, to press upon you, with all the warmth of a sincere friendship.

By the time you will see this, you will have had an instance, I humbly trust, of the comfortable importance of a pacified conscience, in the last hours of one who, *to the last hour*, will wish your eternal welfare.

The great Duke of Luxemburgh, as I have heard, on his death-bed declared that he would then much rather have had it to reflect upon, that he had administered a cup of cold water to a worthy poor creature in distress, than that he had won so many battles as he had triumphed for; as has been observed, all the sentiments of worldly grandeur vanish at that unavoidable moment which decides the destiny of men.

If then, sir, at the tremendous hour, it be thus with the conquerors of armies and the subduers of nations, let me in very few words ask, what, at that period, must be the reflections of those, if *capable* of reflection, who have lived a life of offence, whose study and whose pride most ingloriously have been to seduce the innocent, and to ruin the weak, the unguarded, and the friendless; made still more friendless by *their* base seductions? Oh! Mr. Belford, weigh, ponder, and reflect upon it, now, that in health, and in vigour of mind and body, the reflections will most avail you—what an ungrateful, what an unmanly, what a meaner than reptile pride is this!

In the next place, sir, let me beg of you, for *my sake*, who *am*, or, as *now* you will best read it, *have been*, driven to the necessity of applying to you to be the executor of my will, that you will bear, according to that generosity which I think to be in you, with all my friends, and particularly with my brother (who is really a worthy young man, but perhaps a little too headstrong in his resentments and conceptions of things), if anything, by reason of this trust, should fall out disagreeably, and that you will study to make peace, and to reconcile all parties; and more especially, that you, who seem to have a great influence upon your *still more* headstrong friend, will interpose, if occasion be, to prevent *further*

mischievous; for surely, sir, that violent spirit may sit down satisfied with the evils he has already wrought; and particularly, with the wrongs, the heinous and ignoble wrongs, he has in me done to my family, wounded in the tenderest part of its honour.

For your compliance with this request I have already your repeated promise. I claim the observance of it, therefore, as a debt from you; and though I hope I need not doubt it, yet was I willing, on this solemn, this *last* occasion, thus earnestly to re-enforce it.

I have another request to make to you: it is only that you will be pleased, by a particular messenger, to forward the enclosed letters as directed.

And now, sir, having the presumption to think that a *useful* member is lost to society by means of the unhappy step which has brought my life so soon to its period, let me hope that I may be a humble instrument, in the hands of Providence, to reform a man of your abilities; and then I shall think that loss will be more abundantly repaired to the world, while it will be, by God's goodness, my gain, and I shall have this farther hope, that once more I shall have an opportunity, in a blessed eternity, to thank you, as I now repeatedly do, for the good you have done to, and the trouble you will have taken for, sir,

Your obliged servant,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

The other letters are directed to her father, her mother, her uncles, her brother and sister, her aunt Hervey, her cousin Morden, Miss Howe, and Mrs. Norton, and one to you, in performance of her promise, *that a letter should be sent you when she arrived at her father's house*. I will withhold this last till I can be assured that you will be fitter to receive it than Tourville tells me you are at present.

Copies of all these are sealed and entitled, "Copies of my posthumous letters, for J. Belford, Esq.," and put in among the bundle of papers left to my direction, which I have not yet had leisure to open.

No wonder, while able, that she was always writing, since thus only of late could she employ that time which heretofore, from the long days she made, caused so many beautiful works to spring from her fingers.

There never was a woman so young, who wrote so much, and with such celerity. Her thoughts keeping pace, as I have

seen, with her pen, she hardly ever stopped or hesitated, and very seldom blotted out or altered. It was a natural talent she was mistress of, among many other extraordinary ones.

I gave the Colonel his letter, and ordered Harry instantly to get ready to carry the others.

Meantime, retiring into the next apartment, we opened the will. We were both so much affected in perusing it, that at one time the Colonel, breaking off, gave it to me to read on—at another, I gave it back to him to proceed with, neither of us being able to read it through without such tokens of sensibility as affected the voices of each.

Mrs. Lovick, Mrs. Smith, and her nurse, were still more touched when we read those articles in which they are respectively remembered; but I will avoid mentioning the particulars (except in what relates to the thread of my narration), as in proper time I shall send you a copy of it.

The Colonel told me he was ready to account with me for the money and bills he had brought up from Harlowe Place, which would enable me, as he said, directly to execute the legacy parts of the will; and he would needs at that instant force into my hands a paper relating to that subject. I put it in my pocket-book, without looking into it, telling him, that as I hoped he would do all in his power to promote a literal performance of the will, I must beg his advice and assistance in the execution of it.

Her request to be buried with her ancestors made a letter necessary, which I prevailed upon the Colonel to write, being unwilling myself—so *early* at least—to appear officious in the eye of a family which probably wishes not any communication with me.

(To James Harlowe, jun., Esq.)

SIR,

THE letter which the bearer of this brings with him will, I presume, make it unnecessary to acquaint you and my cousins with the death of the most excellent of women. But I am requested by her executor, who will soon send you a copy of her last will, to acquaint her father (which I choose to do by your means) that in it she earnestly desires to be laid in the family vault, at the feet of her grandfather.

If her father will not admit of it, she has directed her body to be buried in the churchyard of the parish where she died.

I need not tell you that a speedy answer to this is necessary.

Her beatification commenced yesterday afternoon, exactly at forty minutes after six.

I can write no more, than that I am

Yours, &c.,

WM. MORDEN.

Friday morning, September 8th.

By the time this was written, and by the Colonel's leave transcribed, Harry came booted and spurred, his horse at the door; and I delivered him the letters to the family, with those to Mrs. Norton and Miss Howe, together with the above of the Colonel to Mr. James Harlowe; and gave him orders to make the utmost dispatch with them.

The Colonel and I have bespoke mourning for ourselves and servants.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Saturday, 10 o'clock.

POOR Mrs. Norton is come. She was set down at the door, and would have gone upstairs directly; but Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Lovick being together and in tears, and the former hinting too suddenly to the truly venerable woman the fatal news, she sunk down at her feet in fits; so that they were forced to breathe a vein, to bring her to herself, and to a capacity of exclamation: and then she ran on to Mrs. Lovick and to me, who entered just as she recovered, in praise of the lady, in lamentations for her, and invectives against you; but yet so circumscribed were her invectives, that I could observe in them the woman well educated, and in her lamentations, the passion christianized.

She was impatient to see the corpse. The women went up with her. But they owned that they were too much affected themselves on this occasion to describe her affecting behaviour.

With trembling impatience she pushed aside the coffin-lid. She bathed the face with her tears, and kissed her cheeks and forehead, as if she were living. It was *she* indeed, she said. Her sweet young lady! Her very self! Nor had death, which changed all things, a power to alter her lovely features! She admired the serenity of her aspect. She no doubt was happy, she said, as she had written to her she should be. But how many miserable creatures had she left

behind her! The good woman lamenting that she herself had lived to be one of them.

It was with difficulty they prevailed upon her to quit the corpse; and when they went into the next apartment, I joined them, and acquainted her with the kind legacy her beloved young lady had left her; but this rather augmented than diminished her concern. She ought, she said, to have attended her in person. What was the world to her, wringing her hands, now the child of her bosom, and of her heart, was no more? Her principal consolation, however, was, that she should not long survive her. She hoped, she said, that she did not sin, in wishing she might not.

It was easy to observe by the similitude of sentiments shown in this and other particulars, that the divine lady owed to this excellent woman many of her good notions.

I thought it would divert the poor gentlewoman, and not altogether unsuitably, if I were to put her upon furnishing mourning for herself; as it would rouse her, by a seasonable and necessary employment, from that dismal lethargy of grief, which generally succeeds the violent anguish with which a gentle nature is accustomed to be torn upon the first communication of the unexpected loss of a dear friend. I gave her therefore the thirty guineas bequeathed to her and to her son for mourning; the only mourning which the testatrix has mentioned, and desired her to lose no time in preparing her own, as I doubted not that she would accompany the corpse, if it were permitted to be carried down.

The Colonel proposes to attend the hearse if his kindred give him not fresh cause of displeasure, and will take with him a copy of the will. And being intent to give the family some favourable impressions of me, he desired me to permit him to take with him the copy of the posthumous letter to me, which I readily granted.

He is so kind as to promise me a minute account of all that shall pass on the melancholy occasion. And we have begun a friendship and settled a correspondence, which but *one incident* can possibly happen to interrupt to the end of our lives. That I hope will not happen.

But what must be the grief, the remorse that will seize upon the hearts of this hitherto inexorable family on the receiving of the posthumous letters, and that of the Colonel, apprising them of what has happened?

I have given requisite orders to an undertaker, on the supposition that the body will be permitted to be carried down, The women intend to fill the coffin with aromatic herbs.

The Colonel has obliged me to take the bills and draughts which he brought up with him, for the considerable sums accrued since the grandfather's death from the lady's estate.

I could have shown Mrs. Norton the copies of the two letters which she missed by coming up, but her grief wants not the heightenings which the reading of them would have given her.

* * * *

I have been dipping into the copies of the posthumous letters to the family, which Harry has carried down. Well may I call this lady divine. They are all calculated to give comfort rather than reproach, though their cruelty to her merited nothing *but* reproach. But were I in any of their places, how much rather had I that she had quitted scores with me by the most severe recriminations than that she should thus nobly triumph over me by a generosity that has no example.

I will enclose some of them, which I desire you to return as soon as you can.

(To the Ever-honoured James Harlowe, senr., Esq.)

MOST DEAR SIR,

WITH exulting confidence now does your emboldened daughter come into your awful presence by these lines, who dared not but upon this occasion to look up to you with hopes of favour and forgiveness, since, when this comes to your hands it will be out of her power ever to offend you more.

And now let me bless you, my honoured papa, and bless you as I write upon my knees, for all the benefits I have received from your indulgence; for your fond love to me in the days of my prattling innocence; for the virtuous education you gave me, and for the crown of all, the happy end, which, through Divine Grace, by means of that virtuous education, I hope, by the time you will receive this, I shall have made. And let me beg of you, dear venerable sir, to blot from your remembrance, if possible, the last unhappy eight months, and then I shall hope to be remembered with advantage for the pleasure you had the goodness to take in your Clarissa.

Still on her knees let your poor penitent implore your forgiveness of all her faults and follies, more especially of that fatal error which threw her out of your protection.

When you know, sir, that I have never been faulty in my will; that ever since my calamity became irretrievable, I

have been in a state of preparation ; that I have the strongest assurances that the Almighty has accepted my unfeigned repentance, and that by this time you will, as I humbly presume to hope, have been the means of adding one to the number of the blessed, you will have reason for joy rather than sorrow. Since, had I escaped the snares by which I was entangled I might have wanted those exercises which I look upon now as so many mercies dispensed to wean me betimes from a world that presented itself to me with prospects too alluring, and in that case, too easily satisfied with *worldly* felicity, I might not have attained to that blessedness in which now, on your reading of this, I humbly presume, through the Divine goodness, I am rejoicing.

That the Almighty, in His own good time, will bring you, sir, and my ever-honoured mother, after a series of earthly felicities, of which my unhappy and grievous fault has been the only interruption, to rejoice in the same blessed state, is the repeated prayer of, sir,

Your now happy daughter,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

(To the ever-honoured Mrs. Harlowe.)

HONOURFD MADAM,

THE last time I had the boldness to write to you, it was with all the consciousness of a self-convicted criminal, supplicating her offended judge for mercy and pardon. I now, by these lines, approach you with more assurance ; but nevertheless with the highest degree of reverence, gratitude, and duty. The reason of my assurance, my letter to my papa will give ; and as I humbly on my knees implored *his* pardon, so now, in the same dutiful manner, do I supplicate yours, for the grief and trouble I have given you.

Every vein of my heart has bled for an unhappy rashness, which, although involuntary in act, from the moment it was committed, carried with it its own punishment ; and was accompanied with a true and sincere penitence.

God, who has been a witness of my distresses, knows that, great as they have been, the greatest of all was the distress that I knew I must have given to you, madam, and to my father, by a step that had so very ugly an appearance in your eyes and his ; and indeed in the eyes of all my family ; a step so unworthy of *your* daughter, and of the education you had given her !

But HE, I presume to hope, has forgiven me ; and at the instant this will reach your hands, I humbly trust, I shall

be rejoicing in the blessed fruits of His forgiveness. And be this your comfort, my ever-honoured mamma, that the principal end of your pious care for me is attained, though not in the way so much hoped for.

May the grief which my fatal error has given to you both, be the only grief that shall ever annoy you in this world! May you, madam, long live to sweeten the cares, and heighten the comforts of my papa! May my sister's continued, and, if possible, augmented duty, happily make up to you the loss you have sustained of me! And whenever my brother and she change their single state, may it be with such satisfaction to you both, as may make you forget my offence. Remember me only in those days, in which you took pleasure in me! And, at last, may a happy meeting with your forgiven penitent, in the eternal mansions, augment the bliss of her who, purified by sufferings, already, when this salutes your hands, presumes she shall be

The happy, and for ever happy,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

(To James Harlowe, jun., Esq.)

SIR,

THERE was but one time, but one occasion, after the rash step I was precipitated upon, that I could hope to be excused looking up to you in the character of a brother and a friend. And *now* is that time, and *this* the occasion. Now, at reading this, will you pity your late unhappy sister? *Now* will you forgive her faults, both supposed and real? And *now* will you afford to her *memory* that kind concern which you refused to her before?

I write, my brother, in the first place, to beg your pardon for the offence my unhappy step gave to you and to the rest of a family so dear to me.

Yet, when you come to know all my story, you will find further room for pity, if not for *more* than pity, for your late unhappy sister.

Oh that passion had not been deaf! that misconception would have given way to inquiry! that your rigorous heart, if it could not itself be softened, moderating the power you had obtained over every one, had permitted other hearts more indulgently to expand!

But I write not to give pain. I had rather you should think me faulty still, than take to yourself the consequence that will follow from acquitting me.

Abandoning, therefore, a subject which I had not intended to touch upon (for I hope, at the writing of this, I am above the spirit of recrimination), let me tell you, sir, that my next motive for writing to you in this last and most solemn manner is, to beg of you to forego any active resentments, which may endanger a life so precious to all your friends, against the man to whose elaborate baseness I owe my worldly ruin.

For ought an innocent man to run an *equal* risk with a guilty one? A *more* than equal risk, as the guilty one has been long enured to acts of violence, and is skilled in the arts of offence?

You would not arrogate to yourself God's province, who has said, *Vengeance is mine, and I will repay it*. If you would, I tremble for the consequence.

* * * *

Leave, then, the poor wretch to the Divine justice. Let your sister's fault die with her. At least, let it not be revived in blood. Life is a short stage where longest. A little time hence, the now green head will be grey, if it lives this little time; and, if Heaven will afford him time for repentance, why should not *you*?

Then think, my brother, what will be the consequence to your dear parents, if the guilty wretch who has occasioned to them the loss of a daughter, should likewise deprive them of their best hope, an only son, more worth in the family account than several daughters?

Would you add, my brother, to those distresses which you hold your sister so inexcusable for having, although from involuntary and undesigned causes, given?

Seek not then, I beseech you, to extend the evil consequences of your sister's error. His conscience, when it shall please God to touch it, will be sharper than your sword.

I have still another motive for writing to you in this solemn manner. It is, to entreat you to watch over your passions. The principal fault I know you to be guilty of, is the violence of your temper when you think yourself in the right, which you would oftener be but for that very violence.

You have several times brought your life into danger by it.

Is not the man guilty of a high degree of injustice who is more apt to *give* contradiction than able to *bear* it? How often with you has impetuosity brought on abasement!

Let me then caution you, dear sir, against a warmth of

temper and an impetuosity so *ready* to be moved, that may hurry you into unforeseen difficulties, and which it is in some measure a sin not to endeavour to restrain. God enable you to do it for the sake of your own peace and safety, as well present as future! and for the sake of your family and friends, who all see your fault, but are tender of speaking to you of it.

As for me, my brother, my punishment has been seasonable. God gave me grace to make a right use of my sufferings. I early repented. I never loved the man half so much as I hated his actions when I saw what he was capable of. I gave up my *whole* heart to a better hope. God blessed my penitence and my reliance upon Him. And now I presume to say I am happy.

May Heaven preserve you in safety, health, and honour, and long continue your life for a comfort and stay to your honoured parents! And may you, in the change of your single state, meet with a wife as agreeable to every one else as to yourself, and be happy in a hopeful race; and may you not have one Clarissa among them to embitter your comforts when she should give you *most* comfort! But may my example be of use to warn the dear creatures whom once I hoped to live to see and to cherish, of the evils with which this deceitful world abounds, are the prayers of

Your affectionate sister,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

(To Miss Harlowe.)

Now may you, my dear Arabella, unrestrained by the severity of your virtue, let fall a pitying tear on the past faults and sufferings of your late unhappy sister, since *now* she can never offend you more. The Divine mercy, which first inspired her with repentance—an early repentance preceding her sufferings—for an error which she offers not to extenuate, although perhaps it were capable of some extenuation, has *now*, at the instant that you are reading this, as I humbly hope, blessed her with the fruits of it.

Thus already, even while she writes, in imagination, purified and exalted, she the more fearlessly writes to her sister, and now is assured of pardon for all those little occasions of displeasure which her frowarder youth might give you, and for the disgrace which her fall has fastened upon you and upon her family.

May you, my sister, continue to bless those dear and

honoured relations, whose indulgence so well deserves your utmost gratitude, with those cheerful instances of duty and obedience which have hitherto been so acceptable to *them* and praiseworthy in *you* ! And may you, when a suitable proposal shall offer, fill up more worthily that chasm which the loss they have sustained in me has made in their family.

Thus, my Arabella ! my only sister ! and for many happy years my friend ! most fervently prays that sister, whose affection for you no acts of unkindness, no misconstruction of her conduct, could cancel ! and who now, made perfect, as she hopes, through sufferings, styles herself

The happy

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

(To John and Antony Harlowe, Esqs.)

HONOURED SIRS,

WHEN these lines reach your hands, your late unhappy niece will have known the end of all her troubles ; and, as she humbly hopes, will be rejoicing in the mercies of a gracious God, who has declared that He will forgive the truly penitent of heart.

I write, therefore, my dear uncles, and to you both in one letter, since your fraternal love has made you both but as one person, to give you comfort, and not distress ; for, however sharp my afflictions have been, they have been but of short duration ; and I am betimes (happily as I hope) arrived at the end of a painful journey.

At the same time, I write to thank you both for all your kind indulgence to me, and to beg your forgiveness of my last, my *only* great fault to you and to my family.

The ways of Providence are unsearchable. Various are the means made use of by it to bring poor sinners to a sense of their duty. Some are drawn by love, others driven by terrors to their Divine Refuge. I had for eighteen years out of nineteen rejoiced in the favour and affection of every one. No trouble came near my heart. I seemed to be one of those designed to be drawn by the silken cords of love. But, perhaps, I was too apt to value myself upon the love and favour of every one. The merit of the good I delighted to do, and of the inclinations which were given me, and which I could not *help* having, I was, perhaps, too ready to attribute to myself ; and now, being led to account for the cause of my temporary calamities, I find I had a secret pride to be punished for, which I had not fathomed ; and it was

necessary, perhaps, that some sore and terrible misfortunes should befall me, in order to mortify my pride and vanity.

Temptations were sent. I shrunk in the day of trial. My discretion, which had been so cried up, was found wanting when it came to be weighed in an equal balance. I was betrayed, fell, and became the by-word of my companions, and a disgrace to my family, which had prided itself in me perhaps too much. But as my fault was not that of a culpable will, when my pride was sufficiently mortified, I was not suffered (although surrounded by dangers, and entangled in snares) to be totally lost; but, purified by sufferings, I was fitted for the change I have *now*, at the time you will receive this, so newly, and, as I humbly hope, so happily experienced.

Rejoice with me then, dear sirs, that I have weathered so great a storm. Nor let it be matter of concern, that I am cut off in the bloom of youth. "There is no inquisition in the grave," says the wise man, "whether we lived ten or a hundred years; and the day of death is better than the day of our birth."

Once more, dear sirs, accept my grateful thanks for all your goodness to me, from my early childhood to the day, the unhappy day, of my error! Forgive that error!—And God give us a happy meeting in a blessed eternity! prays

Your most dutiful and obliged kinswoman,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

[Mr. Belford gives the lady's posthumous letters to Mrs. Hervey, Miss Howe, and Mrs. Norton, at length likewise; but, although every letter varies in style as well as matter from the others, yet, as they are written on the same subject, and are pretty long, it is thought proper to abstract them.]

That to her aunt Hervey is written in the same pious and generous strain with those preceding, seeking to give comfort rather than distress. "The Almighty, I hope," says she, "has received and blessed my penitence, and I am happy. Could I have been more than so, at the end of what is called a *happy* life of twenty, thirty, or forty years to come? And what are so many years to look back upon? In half of any of these periods, what friends might I not have mourned for! what temptations from worldly prosperity might I not have encountered with! And in such a case, immersed in earthly pleasures, how little likelihood that, in my last stage, I should have been blessed with such a

preparation and resignation as I have now been blessed with!

"Thus much, Madam," she proceeds, "of comfort to you and to myself from this dispensation. As to my dear parents, I hope they will console themselves, that they have still many blessings left, which ought to balance the troubles my error has given them: that unhappy as I have been as the interrupter of their felicities, they never, till this my fault, knew any *heavy evil*; that afflictions patiently borne may be turned into blessings; that, after all, they have not, as I humbly presume to hope, the probability of the everlasting perdition of their child to deplore; and, in short, that when my story comes to be fully known, they will have the comfort to find that my sufferings redound more to my honour than to my disgrace.

"These considerations will, I hope, make their temporary loss of but *one* child out of *three*, unhappily circumstanced as she was, matter of greater consolation than affliction, and the rather as we may hope for a happy meeting once more, never to be separated either by time or offences."

She concludes this letter with an address to her cousin, Dolly Hervey, whom she calls her amiable cousin, and thankfully remembers for the part she took in her afflictions.—"O my dear cousin," she says, "let your worthy heart be guarded against those delusions which have been fatal to my worldly happiness! That pity, which you bestowed upon *me*, demonstrates a gentleness of nature which may possibly subject you to misfortunes, if your eye be permitted to mislead your judgment; but a strict observance of your filial duty, my dearest cousin, and the precepts of so prudent a mother as you have the happiness to have, enforced by so sad an example in your family as I have set, will, I make no doubt, with the Divine assistance, be your guard and security."

* * * *

The posthumous letter to Miss Howe is extremely tender and affectionate. She pathetically calls upon her "to rejoice that all her *Clarissa's* troubles are now at an end; that the state of temptation and trial, of doubt and uncertainty, is now over with her, and that she has happily escaped the snares that were laid for her soul; and the rather to rejoice that her misfortunes were of such a nature that it was impossible she could be tolerably happy in this life."

She "thankfully acknowledges the favours she had received from Mrs. Howe and Mr. Hickman, and expresses

her concern for the trouble she has occasioned to the former as well as to her ; and prays that all the earthly blessings they used to wish to each other may singly devolve upon *her*.

She beseeches her, "that she will not suspend the day, which shall supply to herself the friend she will have lost in her, and give to herself a still nearer and dearer relation."

She tells her "that her choice, and that of all her friends, has fallen upon a sincere, an honest, virtuous, and what is more than all, a *pious* man, a man who, although he admires her person, is still more in love with the graces of her mind. And what a firm basis," adds she, "has Mr. Hickman chosen to build his love upon."

She prays "that God will bless them together ; and that the remembrance of her, and of what she has suffered, may not interrupt their mutual happiness ; she desires them to think of nothing but what she *now is* ; and that a time will come when they shall meet again, never to be divided."

"To the Divine protection, meantime, she commits her, and charges her, by the love that has always subsisted between them, that she will not mourn too heavily for her, and calls upon her, after a tear, which she will allow her to let fall in memory of their uninterrupted friendship, to rejoice that she is so early released, that she is purified by her sufferings, and made, as she assuredly trusts, by God's goodness, eternally happy."

[The posthumous letters to Mr. Lovelace and Mr. Morden will be inserted hereafter ; as will also the substance of that written to Mrs. Norton.]

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Saturday afternoon, September 9th.

I UNDERSTAND that thou breathest nothing but revenge against *me*, for treating thee with so much freedom, and against the accursed woman and her infernal crew. I am not at all concerned for thy menaces against myself. It is my design to make thee *feel*. It gives me pleasure to find my intention answered ; and I congratulate thee that thou hast not lost that sense.

As to the cursed crew, well do they deserve the fire *here* that thou threatenest them with, and the fire hereafter that seems to await them. But I have this moment received news which will, in all likelihood, save thee the guilt of punishing the old wretch for her share of wickedness as thy *agent*

But if that happens to her which is likely to happen, wilt thou not tremble for what may befall the *principal*?

Last night, it seems, the woman Sinclair got so intoxicated, that, mistaking her way, she fell down a pair of stairs, and broke her leg; and now, after a dreadful night, she lies raving in a burning fever, that wants not any other fire to scorch her into a feeling more durable than any thy vengeance could give her.*

The wretch has requested me to come to her, and lest I should refuse a common messenger, sent Sally Martin to me, who, not finding me at Soho, came hither, another part of her business being to procure the divine lady's pardon for the old creature's wickedness to her.

This Sally declares that she never was so shocked in her life as when I told her the lady was dead.

She took out her salts to keep her from fainting, and, when a little recovered, she accused herself for her part against the lady, declaring that the world never produced such another woman. She called her the ornament and glory of her sex, and acknowledged that her ruin was owing much to *their instigations*, since thou wert inclined to have done her justice more than once, had they not kept up thy profligate spirit.

This wretch would fain have been admitted to a sight of the corpse; but I refused her request with execrations.

At going away she told me that the old creature's state is dangerous; that a mortification is apprehended; and that the vile wretch has so much compunction of heart, on recollecting her treatment of Miss Harlowe, and is so much set upon procuring her forgiveness, that she is sure the news she has to carry her will hasten her end.

All these things I leave upon thy reflection.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Saturday night.

YOUR servant gives me a dreadful account of your raving unmanageableness. I wonder not at it. But as nothing violent is lasting, I dare say that your habitual gaiety of heart will quickly get the better of your frenzy; and the rather do I judge so, as your fits are of the

* This notice of a bad woman's death would have been omitted but for the moral inculcated by Richardson on the reward of virtue and the punishment of vice.

raving kind, suitable to your natural impetuosity, and not of that melancholy species which seizes gentler souls.

For this reason I proceed, in writing to you, that my narrative may help you to reflection when you shall be restored.

Harry is returned from carrying the posthumous letters to the family and to Miss Howe, and that of the Colonel which acquaints James Harlowe with his sister's death, and with her desire to be interred near her grandfather.

Harry was not admitted into the presence of any of the family. They were all assembled together at Harlowe Place, on occasion of the Colonel's letter which informed them of the lady's dangerous way; and were comforting themselves, as Harry was told, with hopes that Mr. Morden had made the worst of her state in order to quicken their resolutions.

It is easy then to judge what must be their grief and surprise on receiving the fatal news which the letters communicated.

Harry stayed there long enough to find the whole house in confusion. The servants running different ways, lamenting and wringing their hands as they ran, the female servants particularly, as if somebody—poor Mrs. Harlowe no doubt, and perhaps Mrs. Hervey too—were in fits.

Every one was in such disorder that he could get no commands nor obtain any notice of himself. The servants seemed more inclined to execrate than welcome him. "O master! O young man!" cried three or four together, "what dismal tidings have you brought!" They helped him at the very first word to his horse; which with great civility they had put up on his arrival. He went to an inn, and pursued on foot his way to Mrs. Norton's; and finding her come to town, left the letter he carried down for her with her son, a fine youth, who, when he heard the fatal news, burst into a flood of tears—first lamenting the lady's death, and then crying out, "What, what would become of his poor mother. How would she support herself when she should find, on her arrival in town, that the dear lady, who was so deservedly the darling of her heart, was no more."

He proceeded to Miss Howe's, with the letter for her. That lady, he was told, had just given orders for a young man, a tenant's son, to post to London, to bring her news of her dear friend's condition, and whether she should herself be encouraged, by an account of her being still alive, to make her a visit, everything being ordered to be in readiness for her going up, on his return with the news she wished and

prayed for with the utmost impatience. And Harry was just in time to prevent the man's setting out.

He had the precaution to desire to speak with Miss Howe's woman or maid, and communicated to her the fatal tidings, that she might break them to her young lady. The maid was herself so affected, that her old lady, who, Harry said, seemed to be *everywhere at once*, came to see what ailed her; and was herself so struck with the communication, that she was forced to sit down in a chair. "O the sweet creature!" said she. "And is it come to this? O my poor Nancy! How shall I be able to break the matter to my Nancy!"

Mr. Hickman was in the house. He hastened to comfort the old lady, but he could not restrain his own tears. He feared, he said, when he was last in town, that this sad event would *soon* happen, but little thought it would be so *very* soon! "But she is happy, I am sure," said the good gentleman.

Mrs. Howe, when a little recovered, went up, in order to break the news to her daughter. She took the letter, and her salts in her hand. And they had occasion for the latter. For the housekeeper soon came hurrying down into the kitchen, her face overspread with tears. Her young mistress had fainted away, she said; "and no wonder at it, never did there live a lady more deserving of general admiration and lamentation than Miss Clarissa Harlowe! And never was there a stronger friendship dissolved by death than between her young lady and her."

She hurried with a lighted wax-candle, and feathers, to burn under the nose of her young mistress; which showed that she continued in fits.

Mr. Hickman afterwards, with his usual humanity, directed that Harry should be taken care of all night; it being then the close of day. He asked him after my health. He expressed himself excessively afflicted, as well for the death of the most excellent of women, as for the just grief of the lady whom he, so passionately loves. But he called the departed lady an angel of light. "We dreaded," said he, "tell your master, to read the letter sent, but we needed not. 'Tis a blessed letter! But the consolation she aims to give, will for the present heighten the sense we all shall have of the loss of so excellent a creature! Tell Mr. Belford, that I thank God I am not the man who had the unmerited honour to call himself her brother."

I know how terribly this *great* catastrophe (as I may call it, since so many persons are interested in it) affects *thee*. I

should have been glad to have had particulars of the distress which the first communication of it must have given to the Harlowes. Yet who but must pity the unhappy mother?

The answer which James Harlowe returned to Colonel Morden's letter of notification of his sister's death, and to her request as to interment, will give a faint idea of what their concern must be. Here follows a copy of it.

(To William Morden, Esq.)

Saturday, September 9th.

DEAR COUSIN,

I CANNOT find words to express what we all suffer on the most mournful news that ever was communicated to us.

My sister Arabella,—but, alas! I have now no *other* sister, was preparing to follow Mrs. Norton up, and I had resolved to escort her, and to have looked in upon the dear creature.

God be merciful to us all! To what purpose did the doctor write if she was so near her end? Why, as everybody says, did he not send sooner? or why at all?

The most admirable young creature that ever swerved! Not one friend to be with her! Alas! sir, I fear my mother will never get over this shock. She has been in fits ever since she received the fatal news. My poor father has the gout thrown into his stomach; and heaven knows—O cousin, O sir!—I meant nothing but the honour of the family; yet have I all the weight thrown upon me. [O this cursed Lovelace! may I perish if he escape the deserved vengeance!]

We had begun to please ourselves that we should soon see her here. Good heaven! that her next entrance into this house, after she abandoned us, should be in a coffin!

* * * *

We can have nothing to do with her executor (another strange step of the dear creature's); he cannot expect we will—nor, if he be a gentleman, will he think of acting. Do you, therefore, be pleased, sir, to order an undertaker to convey the body down to us.

My mother says she shall be for ever unhappy, if she may not in death see the dear creature whom she could not see in life. Be so kind therefore as to direct the lid to be only half-screwed down. My poor mother!—she was the darling of her heart!

If we know her will in relation to the funeral, it shall be punctually complied with. As shall everything in it that

is fit or reasonable to be performed; and this without the intervention of strangers.

Will you not, dear sir, favour us with your presence at this melancholy time? Pray do; and pity and excuse, with the generosity which is natural to the brave and the wise, what passed at our last meeting. Every one's respects attend you. And I am, sir,

Your inexpressibly afflicted cousin and servant,
JAS. HARLOWE, Jun.

"Everything that is fit or reasonable to be performed!"—repeated I to the Colonel, from the above letter, on his reading it to me. "That is, everything which she has directed, that *can* be performed. I hope, Colonel, that I shall have no contention with them. I wish no more for *their* acquaintance than they do for *mine*. You, sir, must be the mediator, but I shall insist upon a literal performance in every article."

The Colonel was so kind as to declare he would support me.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

Sunday morning, 8 o'clock, September 10th.

I STAYED at Smith's till I saw the last of all that is mortal of the divine lady.

As she has directed rings by her will to several persons, with her hair to be set in crystal, the afflicted Mrs. Norton cut off, before the coffin was closed, four charming ringlets; one of which the Colonel took for a locket, which, he says, he will have made, and wear next his heart in memory of his beloved cousin.

Between four and five in the morning, the corpse was put into the hearse; the coffin being filled with flowers and aromatic herbs, and proper care taken to prevent the corpse suffering to the eye, from the jolting of the hearse.

Poor Mrs. Norton is extremely ill. I gave particular directions to Mrs. Smith's maid, whom I have ordered to attend the good woman in a mourning chariot, to take care of her. The Colonel, who rides with his servants within view of the hearse, says that he will see my orders in relation to her enforced.

When the hearse was out of sight, I locked up the lady's chamber, into which all that had belonged to her was removed.

I expect to hear from the Colonel as soon as he is got down.

(Mr. Mowbray to Belford.)

Uxbridge, *Sunday morning, 9 o'clock.*

DEAR JACK,

I SEND you enclosed a letter from Mr. Lovelace, which, though written in the cursed algebra, I know to be such a one as will show what a *queer* way he is in, for he read it to us with the air of a tragedian. You will see by it what the mad fellow had intended to do if we had not all of us interposed. He was actually setting out with a surgeon of this place to have the lady opened and embalmed. It is my full persuasion that if he had, her heart would have been found to be iron or marble.

We have got Lord M. to him. His lordship is much afflicted at the lady's death. His sisters and nieces, he says, will be ready to break their hearts. What a rout is here about a woman, for, after all, she was no more.

We have taken a quantity of blood from him, and this has lowered him a little, but he threatens Colonel Morden and you for your cursed reflections (cursed reflections indeed, Jack), and curses all the world and himself still.

Last night his mourning, which is full as deep as for a wife, was brought home, and his fellows' mourning too, and though eight o'clock, he would put it on, and make them attend him in theirs.

Everybody blames him on this lady's account. But I see not for why. She was a *vixen* in her virtue. What a pretty fellow has she ruined, hey, Jack! and her relations are ten times more to blame than he. I will prove this to the teeth of them all. If *they* could use her ill, why should they expect *him* to use her well? You or I, or Tourville, in his shoes, would have done as he has done, and would not our Bob have *married* this flinty-hearted lady? *He is justified evidently.*

Why then should such cursed *qualms* take him? Who would have thought it? Now, hang him, to see him sit silent in a corner, when he has tired himself with his mock majesty, and with his argumentation, so fond of *arguing* as he is, and teaching his shadow to make mouths against the wainscot. The devil fetch me if I have patience with him!

But he has had no rest for these ten days, that's the thing. You must write to him, and pr'ythee coax him, Jack, and send him what he writes for, and give him all his way. There will be no bearing him else, and get the lady buried as fast as you can, and don't let him know where.

This letter should have gone yesterday. We told him it did, but were in hopes he would not have inquired after it again, but he raves, *as he has not* any answer.

What he *vouchsafed* to read of your other letters has given my lord such a curiosity, as makes him desire you to continue your accounts. Pray do, and we will let the poor fellow only into what we think fitting for his present way.

I live a cursed dull life here. With what I so lately saw of poor Belton, and what I now see of this charming fellow, I shall be as crazy as he soon, or as dull as thou, Jack; so must seek for better company in town than either of you. I have been forced to read sometimes to divert me; and you know I hate reading. It sets me into a fit of drowsiness, and then I yawn like a devil.

Yet in Dryden's Palemon and Arcite have I just now met with a passage, that has in it much of our Bob's case.

Let me tell you, that had I begun to write as early as you and Lovelace, I might have cut as good a figure as either of you. Why not? But, boy or man, I ever hated a book. 'Tis a folly to lie. I loved *action*, my boy; and have led in former days many a boy from his book, than ever my master made. Kicking and cuffing, and orchard-robbing, were my early glory.

But I am tired of writing. I never wrote such a long letter in my life. My wrists and my fingers and thumb ache damnably. The pen is a hundredweight. And my eyes are ready to drop out of my head. The cramp in my fingers. I will write no more letters for a twelvemonth. Yet one word: we think the mad fellow coming to. Adieu.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Uxbridge, *Saturday, September 9th.*

JACK,

I THINK it absolutely right that my ever dear and beloved lady should be opened and embalmed. It must be done out of hand, this very afternoon. Your acquaintance Tomkins and old Anderson of this place, whom I will bring with me, shall be the surgeons. I have talked to the latter about it.

I will see everything done with that decorum which the case and the sacred person of my beloved require.

Everything that can be done to preserve the charmer from decay, shall also be done. And when she *will* descend to her original dust, or cannot be kept longer, I will then have her laid in my family vault between my own father and

mother, myself, as I am in my *soul*, so in *person*, chief mourner. But her *heart*, to which I have such unquestionable pretensions, in which once I had so large a share, and which I will prize above my own, I *will* have. I will keep it in spirits. It shall never be out of my sight. And all the charges of *sepulture* too shall be mine.

Surely nobody will dispute my right to her. Whose was she living? Whose is she dead, but mine? Her cursed parents, whose barbarity to her, no doubt, was the *true* cause of her death, have long since renounced her. She left *them* for *me*. She chose *me* therefore: and I was her husband. What though I treated her like a villain? Do I not pay for it now? Would she not have been mine had I not? Nobody will dispute but she would. And has she not forgiven me? I am then *in statu quo prius* with her—am I not!—as if I had never offended? Whose then can she be but mine?

I will free you from your executorship and all your cares.

Take notice, Belford, that I do hereby actually discharge you, and everybody, from all cares and troubles relating to her. And as to her last testament I will execute it myself.

There were no articles between us, no settlements; and she is mine, as you see I have proved to a demonstration; nor could she dispose of herself but as I pleased. Damnation seize me, then, if I make not good my right against all opposers!

Except that she shall not be committed to the unworthy earth so long as she can be kept out of it, her will shall be performed in everything.

I send in the mean time for a lock of her hair.

I charge you stir not in any part of her will, but by my express direction. I will order everything myself, for am I not her husband? and being forgiven by her, am I not the chosen of her heart? What else signifies her forgiveness?

The two insufferable wretches you have sent me plague me to death, and would treat me like a babe in strings. D—— the fellows, what can they mean by it? Yet that crippled monkey, Doleman, joins with them. And, 'as I hear them whisper, they have sent for Lord M. to *control* me, I suppose.

What can they mean by this usage? Sure all the world is run mad but myself. They treat me as they ought every one of themselves to be treated. The whole world is but one great Bedlam. God confound it, and everything in it,

since now my beloved Clarissa Lovelace—no more Harlowe—curse upon that name, and every one called by it!

What I write to you for is,—

1. To forbid you intermeddling with anything relating to her. To forbid Morden intermeddling also. If I remember right, he has threatened me and cursed me, and used me ill—and let him be gone from her, if he would avoid my resentments.

2. To send me a lock of her hair instantly by the bearer.

3. To engage Tomkins to have everything ready for the opening and embalming. I shall bring Anderson with me.

4. To get her will and everything ready for my perusal and consideration.

I will have possession of her dear heart this very night, and let Tomkins provide a proper receptacle and spirits, till I can get a golden one made for it.

I will take her papers. And as no one can do her memory justice equal to myself, and I will not spare myself, who can better show the world what she was, and what a villain he that could use her ill? And the world shall also see what implacable and unworthy parents she had.

All shall be set forth in words at length. No mincing of the matter. Names undisguised as well as facts, for, as I shall make the worst figure in it myself, and have a right to treat myself as nobody else shall, who will control me? Who dare call me to account?

Let me know if the damned mother* be yet the subject of the devil's own vengeance—if the old wretch be dead or alive? Some exemplary mischief I must yet do. My revenge shall sweep away that devil, and all my opposers of the cruel Harlowe family, from the face of the earth. Whole hecatombs ought to be offered up to the manes of my Clarissa Lovelace.

Although her will may in some respects cross mine, yet I expect to be observed. I will be the interpreter of hers.

Next to mine, hers shall be observed: for she is my wife, and shall be to all eternity. I will never have another.

Adieu, Jack. I am preparing to be with you. I charge you, as you value my life or your own, do not oppose me in anything relating to my Clarissa Lovelace.

My temper is entirely altered. I know not what it is to laugh, or smile, or be pleasant. I am grown choleric and impatient, and will not be controlled.

* Sinclair.

I write this in characters as I used to do, that nobody but you should know what I write. For never was any man plagued with impertinents as I am.

R. LOVELACE.

(In a separate paper enclosed in the above.)

LET me tell thee, in characters still, that I am in a dreadful way just now. My brain is all boiling like a caldron over a fiery furnace. What the devil is the matter with me I wonder. I never was so strange in my life.

In truth, Jack, I have been a most execrable villain. And when I consider all my actions to this angel of a woman, and in her the piety, the charity, the wit, the beauty, I have *helped* to destroy, and the good to the world I have thereby been a means of frustrating, I can pronounce damnation upon myself. How then can I expect mercy anywhere else!

I believe I shall have no patience with you when I see you. Your stings and reflections have almost turned my brain.

But here Lord M. they tell me, is come! D—— him, and those who sent for him!

I know not what I have written. But her dear heart and a lock of her hair I will have, let who will be the gainsayers! for is she not mine? Whose else can she be? She has no father nor mother, no sister, no brother; no relations but me. And my beloved is mine; and I am hers: and that's enough.—But oh!

She's out! The damp of death has quench'd her quite!
Those spicy doors, her lips, are shut, close lock'd,
Which never gale of life shall open more!

And is it so? Is it *indeed* so? Good God! Good God! But they will not let me write on. I must go down to this officious Peer. Who the devil sent for him?

(Belford to Mowbray.)

Sunday, September 10th, 4 in the afternoon

I HAVE yours, with our unhappy friend's enclosed. I am glad my Lord is with him. As I presume that his frenzy will be but of short continuance, I most earnestly wish, that on his recovery he could be prevailed upon to go abroad. Mr. Morden, who is inconsolable, has seen by the will (as

indeed he suspected before he read it) that the case was more than a common one; and has dropped hints already, that he looks upon himself, on that account, as freed from his promises made to the dying lady, which were, that he would not seek to avenge her death.

You must make the recovery of his health the motive for urging him on this head; for, if you hint at his own safety, he will not stir, but rather seek the Colonel.

As to the lock of hair, you may easily pacify him (as you once saw the angel) with hair near the colour, if he be intent upon it.

At my Lord's desire I will write on, and in my common hand; that you may judge what is, and what is not, fit to read to Mr. Lovelace at present. But as I shall not forbear reflections as I go along, in hopes to reach his heart on his recovery, I think it best to direct myself to him still; and that as if he were not disordered.

As I shall not have leisure to take copies, and yet am willing to have the whole subject before me, for my own future contemplation, I must insist upon a return of my letters some time hence. Mr. Lovelace knows that this is one of my conditions; and has hitherto complied with it.

Thy letter, Mowbray, is an inimitable performance. Thou art a strange impenetrable creature. But let me most earnestly conjure thee, and the idle flutterer Tourville, from what ye have seen of poor Belton's exit, from our friend Lovelace's frenzy, and the occasion of it, and from the terrible condition in which the wretched Sinclair lies, to set about an immediate change of life and manners. For my own part I am determined, be your resolutions what they may, to take the advice I give.

As witness,

J. BELFORD.

(Extracts—Belford to Lovelace.)

O LOVELACE, I have a scene to paint in relation to the wretched Sinclair that, if I do it justice, will make thee seriously ponder and reflect, or nothing can. I will lead to it in order, and that in my usual hand, that thy compeers may be able to read it as well as thyself.

When I had written the preceding letter, not knowing what to do with myself, recollecting and in vain wishing for that delightful and improving conversation, which I had now for ever lost, I thought I had as good begin the task, which

I had for some time past *resolved* to begin ; that is to say, to go to church, and see if I could not reap some benefit from what I should hear there. Accordingly I determined to go to hear the celebrated preacher at St. James's. But as if the devil, for so I was then ready to conclude, thought himself concerned to prevent my intention, a visit was made me just as I was dressed, which took me off from my purpose.

From whom should this visit be but from Sally Martin, accompanied by Mrs. Carter, the sister of the infamous Sinclair !

These told me that the surgeon, apothecary, and physician, had all given the wretched woman over ; but that she said she could not die nor be at rest till she saw me. And they besought me to accompany them in the coach they came in, if I had one spark of *Christian* charity, as they called it ! left.

I was very loth to be diverted from my purpose by a request so unwelcome, and from people so abhorred ; but at last went, and we got thither by ten, where a scene so shocking presented itself to me, that the death of poor desponding Belton is not, I think, to be compared with it.

The old wretch had been crying, scolding, cursing, ever since the preceding evening, when the surgeon had told her it was impossible to save her, and that mortification had begun ; insomuch that, in compassion to their own *ears*, they had been forced to send for another surgeon purposely to tell her, though against his judgment, and though a friend of the other, that, if she would be patient, she might recover. Nevertheless, her apprehensions of death were so strong, that their imposture had not the intended effect, and she was raving, crying, and cursing when I came, so that as I went upstairs I said, " Surely this noise cannot be from the unhappy woman ! " Sally said it was, and stepping into her room before me, " Dear *Madam* Sinclair," said she, " forbear this noise ! Here comes Mr. Belford ; you'll fright him away."

There were no less than eight of her cursed daughters surrounding her bed when I entered.

The hair of some of them, of divers colours, was obliged to the black-lead comb where black was affected ; the artificial jet, however, yielding apace to the natural brindle. Others were plastered with oil and powder, but every one's hanging about her ears and neck, and each at my entrance stroking their matted locks with both hands under their coifs, mobs, or pinnars. They {were all slipshod ; their gowns, made to

cover hoops, hanging and tangling about their heels. And half of them unpadded, shoulder-bent, pallid-lipped, appearing, from blooming nineteen or twenty over-night, haggard creatures of thirty-eight or forty.

I am the more particular in describing to thee the appearance of these creatures, because I believe thou never sawest any of them thus unprepared for being seen.* I, for my part, never did before. If thou *hadst*, I believe thou wouldst hate a profligate woman, as one of Swift's yahoos, or Virgil's harpies, since the persons of such in their retirements are as filthy as their minds.

* * * *

When I approached the old wretch, what a spectacle presented itself to my eyes!

Her misfortune has not at all sunk, but rather, as I thought, increased her size; rage and violence swelling her features. Her great arms held up, her broad hands clenched with violence, her eyes flaming red, her matted hair spread about her ears and neck, her livid lips parched and heaving with the violence of her gaspings.

As soon as she saw me, her hoarse voice broke upon me: "O Mr. Belford! O sir! see what I am come to! To have such a crew about me, and not one of them to take care of me! but to let me tumble down stairs. Cursed, cursed! May this or worse be their fate, every one of them!"

And then she cursed the more.

* * * *

She began in a whining strain to bemoan herself. "Here," said she—"Heaven grant me patience! am I to die thus miserably in my old age! Self-undone! No time for my affairs! No time to repent! And in a few hours (Oh!—Oh!—O—h!—U—gh—o! screaming) who knows, who can tell *where* I shall be? Oh! that indeed I never, never, had had a being!

"What mercy can I expect? What hope is left for me? That sweet creature! That incomparable Miss Harlowe! She, it seems, is dead and gone! Oh, that cursed man! Had

* Whoever has seen Dean Swift's "Lady's Dressing-room" will think this description of Mr. Belford not only more *natural*, but more *decent painting*, as well as better justified by the *design*, and by the *use* that may be made of it.

However objectionable this description may seem, it is scarcely less severe, and, alas! truthful, than those applying to the "women and girls of the period."—ED.

it not been for *him*! I had never had this, the most crying of all my sins, to answer for!

* * * *

"And *is* she dead?—indeed dead?" proceeded she. "Oh, what an angel have I been the means of destroying! for though it was that wicked man's fault that ever she was in my house, yet it was mine, and yours, and yours, and yours, turning to Sally and the others, that he did not do her justice! And that, *that* is my curse, and will one day be yours!"

I still advised patience. I said she ought to endeavour to compose herself, and then she would at least die with more ease to herself—and satisfaction to her friends, I was *going* to say; but the word *die* put her into a violent raving, and thus she broke in upon me:—

"*Die*, did you say, sir? *Dic*!—I *will* not, I *cannot* die!—I know not *how* to die! *Die*, sir!—and *must* I then die?—leave this world?—I cannot bear it!—and who brought *you* hither, sir," her eyes striking fire at me, "who brought you hither to tell me I must *die*, sir? I cannot, I will not leave this world. Let others die, who wish for another! who expect a better!"

By my faith, Lovelace, I trembled in every joint; and, looking upon *her* and upon the *company* round me, I more than once thought myself to be in one of the infernal mansions.

As nobody cared to tell the unhappy wretch what every one knew must follow, I undertook to be the denouncer of her doom. I sat down by the bedside, and said, "Come, Mrs. Sinclair, let me advise you to forbear these ravings at the carelessness of those who, I find, at the time, could take no care of themselves; and since the accident *has* happened, and cannot be remedied, to resolve to make the best of the matter; for all this violence but enrages the malady, and you will probably fall into a delirium, if you give way to it, which will deprive you of that reason which you ought to make the best of, for the time it may be lent you."

She turned her head towards me, and hearing me speak with a determined *voice*, and seeing me assume as determined an *air*, became more calm and attentive.

I went on telling her that I was glad, from the hints she had given, to find her concerned for her past misspent life, and particularly for the part she had had in the ruin of the most excellent woman on earth; that if she would compose

herself, and patiently submit to the consequence of an evil she had brought upon herself, it might possibly be happy for her yet. "Meantime," continued I, "tell me, with temper and calmness, why you were so desirous to see me?"

She seemed to be in great confusion of thought. At last, after much hesitation, said, "Alas for me! I hardly know *what* I wanted with you. When I found what a cursed way I was in, my conscience smote me. I wanted to see anybody who could give me comfort. Yet could I expect none from *you* neither; for you had declared yourself my enemy, although I had never done you harm; for what was Miss Harlowe to you? But *she* is happy! But, oh! what will become of *me*? Tell me (for the surgeons have told *you* the truth, no doubt), tell me, shall I recover? If I *may*, I will begin a new course of life; as I hope to be saved, I will. I'll renounce you all, every one of you (looking round her), and scrape all I can together and live a life of penitence; and when I die, leave it all to charitable uses—I will, by my soul. Good God of heaven and earth, but this once! this once!" repeating those words five or six times; "spare thy poor creature, and every hour of my life shall be passed in penitence and atonement. Upon my soul it shall!"

"Less vehement! a little less vehement!" said I. "It is not for me to talk to you in a reproaching strain. But as you are in so penitent a way, if I might advise, you should send for a good clergyman, the purity of whose life and manners may make all these things come from him with a better grace than they can from me."

"How, sir! what, sir!" interrupting me; "send for a parson! Then you indeed think I shall die! Then you think there is no room for hope! A parson, sir! Who sends for a parson while there is any hope left? The sight of a parson would be death immediate to me! I cannot, cannot die!"

And then she began again to rave.

"I cannot bear," said I, rising from my seat with a stern air, "to see a reasonable creature behave so outrageously! Will this vehemence, think you, mend the matter? Will it avail you anything? Will it not rather shorten the life you are so desirous to have lengthened, and deprive you of the only opportunity you can ever have to settle your affairs for both worlds? Death is but the common lot; and if it will be *yours* soon," looking at *her*; "it will be also *yours*, and *yours*, and *yours*," speaking with a raised voice, and turning to every trembling one round her (for they all shook at my forcible

application), "and *mine* also. And you have reason to be thankful," turning again to her, "that you did not perish in that act of intemperance which brought you to this; for it might have been your neck as *well* as your leg; and then you had not had the opportunity you now have for repentance. And, the Lord have mercy upon you! into what a state might you have awoke?"

Then did the poor wretch set up a frightful howl, as if already pangs infernal had taken hold of her. "O pity me, pity me, Mr. Belford," cried she. "*What* I may be, and *where*, in a very few hours—who can tell?"

I told her it was in vain to flatter her; it was my opinion she would not recover.

This declaration set her raving. Seeing her thus in a frenzy, I told them that their best way was to send for a minister to pray and reason with her, as soon as she should be capable of it.

And so I left them; and never was so sensible of the benefit of fresh air as I was the moment I entered the street.

My reflections on these things are more edifying to me than any sermon I could have heard preached.

[To have done with so shocking a subject at once, we shall take notice that Mr. Belford in a future letter writes that the miserable woman, increasing in tortures of body and mind, held out so till Thursday, September 21st, and died in agonies.]

(Colonel Morden to Belford.)

Sunday night, September 10th.

DEAR SIR,

ACCORDING to my promise, I send you an account of matters here. Poor Mrs. Norton was so very ill upon the road, that, slowly as the hearse moved, and the chariot followed, I was afraid we should not have got her to St. Alban's. We put up there, as I had intended. I was in hopes that she would have been better for the stop, but I was forced to leave her behind me. I ordered the servant maid you were so considerably kind as to send down with her, to be very careful of her, and left the chariot to attend her. She deserves all the regard that can be paid her, not only upon my cousin's account, but on her own. She is an excellent woman.

When we were within five miles of Harlowe Place, I put on a hand gallop. I ordered the hearse to proceed more

slowly, having more time before us than I wanted, for I wished not the hearse to be in till near dusk.

I got to Harlowe Place about four o'clock. You may believe I found a mournful house. You desire me to be very minute.

At my entrance into the court, they were all in motion. Every servant whom I saw had swelled eyes, and looked with so much concern, that at first I apprehended some new disaster had happened in the family.

Mr. John and Mr. Antony Harlowe and Mrs. Hervey were there. They all helped on one another's grief, as they had before done each other's hardness of heart.

My cousin James met me at the entrance of the hall. His countenance expressed a fixed concern, and he desired me to excuse his behaviour the last time I was there.

My cousin Arabella came to me full of tears and grief.

"Oh, cousin!" said she, hanging upon my arm, "I dare not ask you any questions."

About the approach of the hearse she meant.

I myself was full of grief; and without going farther or speaking, sat down in the hall in the first chair.

The brother sat down on one hand of me, the sister on the other. Both silent; the latter in tears.

Mr. Antony Harlowe came to me. His face was over-spread with the appearance of woe. He requested me to walk into the parlour, where were all his fellow-mourners.

My cousins James and Arabella followed me.

A perfect concert of grief broke out the moment I entered.

My cousin Harlowe, the dear creature's father, as soon as he saw me, said, "Oh, cousin, cousin, of all our family, you are the only one who has nothing to reproach yourself with. *You* are a happy man."

The poor mother, bowing her head to me in speechless grief, sat with her handkerchief held to her eyes, with one hand; the other was held by her sister Hervey, Mrs. Hervey weeping.

Near the window sat Mr. John Harlowe, his face turned from the sorrowing company, his eyes red.

My cousin Antony, at his re-entering the parlour, went towards Mrs. Harlowe. "Don't, dear sister," said he, "thus give way." And without being able to say another word, went to a corner of the parlour, and, wanting himself the comfort he would fain have given, sunk into a chair, and audibly sobbed.

Miss Arabella followed her uncle Antony, as he walked in before me, and seemed as if she would have spoken to the pierced mother some words of comfort, but she was unable to utter them, and got behind her mother's chair, and, inclining her face over it, on the unhappy lady's shoulder, seemed to claim the consolation that indulgent parent then was unable to afford her.

Young Mr. Harlowe, with all his vehemence of spirit, was now subdued. His self-reproaching conscience, no doubt, was the cause of it.

And what, sir, must their thoughts be, which, at that moment, in a manner turned their speech into sighs and groans! How to be pitied, how greatly to be pitied, all of them! But how much to be cursed that abhorred Lovelace, who, as it seems, by arts uncommon, and a villainy without example, has been the sole author of a woe so complicated and extensive. God judge me, as——But I stop. The man (the *man* can I say?) is your friend. He already suffers, you tell me, in his intellect. Restore him, Heaven, to that. If I find the matter come out, as I *apprehend* it will; indeed, her own hint of his usage of her in her will is enough—nor think, my beloved cousin, thou darling of my heart! that thy gentle spirit, breathing charity and forgiveness to the vilest of men, shall avail him.

But once more I stop. Forgive me, sir. Who could behold such a scene, every one of the mourners nearly related to himself, and not be exasperated against the author of all?

As I was the only person, grieved as I was myself, from whom any of them, at that instant, could derive comfort: "Let us not," said I, "my dear cousin," approaching the inconsolable mother, "give way to a grief which, however just, can now avail us nothing. We cannot recall the dear creature for whom we mourn. Nor would you wish it, if you knew with what assurances of eternal happiness she left the world. She is happy, madam, depend upon it. Comfort yourselves with that assurance."

"Oh, cousin!" cried the unhappy mother, withdrawing her hand from that of her sister, and pressing mine with it, "you know not what a child I have lost!—And *how* lost!" whispering.

They all joined in a melancholy chorus, and each accused him and herself, and some of them one another. But the eyes of all, in turn, were cast upon my cousin James as the person who had kept up the general resentment against so sweet a creature, while he was hardly able to bear his own remorse, nor Miss Harlowe hers. "How tauntingly did I

write to her," said she. "How barbarously did I insult her! Yet how patiently did she take it! Who would have thought that she had been so near her end? Oh, brother! but for *you*!—for *you*!"

"Double not," said he, "my own woes. I thought only to reclaim a dear creature that had erred. I intended not to break her tender heart; but it was the villainous Lovelace who did that, not any of us. Yet, cousin, did she not attribute all to *me*? I fear she did. Tell me, did she *name* me in her last hours? I hope she, who could forgive the greatest villain on earth, could forgive *me*."

"She died blessing you all, and justified rather than condemned your severity to her."

They set up another lamentation. "We see," said her father, "in her heart-piercing letters to us, what a happy frame she was in a few days before her death; but did it hold to the last? Had she no repinings?"

"None at all. I never saw, and never shall see, so blessed a *departure*. We need only to wish for so happy an end for ourselves. Had all happened that once she wished for, she could not have made a happier end."

* * * *

"Would to Heaven," exclaimed the poor mother, "I had but *once* seen her!" Then, turning to my cousin James and his sister, "Oh, my son! Oh, my Arabella! If we were to receive as little mercy!"

Every one was silent.

Oh, this cursed friend of yours, Mr. Belford!—This detested Lovelace!

One o'clock in the morning.

IN vain, sir, have I endeavoured to compose myself to rest. You wished me to be very particular, and I cannot help it. This melancholy subject fills my whole mind. I will proceed, though it be midnight.

About six o'clock, the hearse came to the outward gate. The parish church is at some distance; but the wind setting fair, the afflicted family were struck, just before it came, into a fresh fit of grief, on hearing the funeral bell tolled in a very solemn manner; a respect, as it proved, and as they all guessed, paid to the memory of the dear deceased out of officious love, as the hearse passed near the church.

A servant came in to acquaint us with what its lumbering heavy noise up the paved inner court-yard apprised us of before.]

He spoke not. He could not speak. He looked, bowed, and withdrew.

I stepped out. No one else could then stir. Her brother, however, soon followed me.

When I came to the door, I beheld a sight very affecting.

You have heard, sir, how universally my dear cousin was beloved. By the poor and middling sort especially; and with reason. She was the common patroness of all the honest poor in her neighbourhood.

It is natural for us in every deep and sincere grief to interest all we know in what is so concerning to ourselves. The servants of the family, it seems, had told *their* friends, and those *theirs*; that though, living, their dear young lady could not be received nor looked upon, her body was permitted to be brought home. The time was so short, that those who knew when she died must easily guess *near the time* the hearse was to come. A hearse, passing through country villages, and from London, however slenderly attended—for the chariot, as I have said, waited upon poor Mrs. Norton—takes every one's attention. Nor was it hard to guess whose *this* must be, though not adorned by escutcheons, when the cross-roads to Harlowe Place were taken, as soon as it came within six miles of it; so that the hearse, and the solemn tolling of the bell, had drawn together at least fifty of the neighbouring men, women, and children, and some of good appearance. Not a soul of them, it seems, with a dry eye; and each lamenting the death of this admired lady, who, as I am told, never stirred out but somebody was the better for her.

These, when the coffin was taken out of the hearse, crowding about it, hindered, for a few moments, its being carried in; the young people struggling who should bear it; and yet with respectful whisperings, rather than clamorous contention—a mark of veneration I had never before seen paid, upon any occasion, in all my travels, from the under-bred many, from whom noise is generally inseparable in all their emulations.

At last six maidens were permitted to carry it in by the handles.

The corpse was thus borne, with the most solemn respect, into the hall, and placed for the present upon two stools there. The plates, and emblems, and inscription, set every one gazing upon it, and admiring it. The more, when they were told that all was of her own ordering. They wished to be permitted a sight of the corpse. When they had all

satisfied their curiosity, and remarked upon the emblems, they dispersed with blessings upon her memory, and with tears and lamentations; pronouncing her to be happy; and inferring, were she not so, what would become of them; while others ran over with repetitions of the good she delighted to do. Nor were there wanting those among them who heaped curses upon the man who was the author of her fall.

The servants of the family then got about the coffin, and that afforded a new scene of sorrow, but a silent one; for they spoke only by their eyes and by sighs, looking upon the lid by turns.

Mr. James Harlowe, who accompanied me, stood looking upon the lid when the people had left it, in a profound reverie, his arms folded, and marks of stupefaction imprinted upon every feature.

But when the corpse was carried into the lesser parlour, adjoining to the hall, which she used to call *her* parlour, and put upon a table in the middle of the room, and the father and mother, the uncles, her aunt, and her sister came in, with trembling feet, the scene was still more affecting. Their sorrow was heightened, no doubt, by the remembrance of their severity; and now, seeing before them the receptacle that contained her who so lately was driven thence by their indiscreet violence, never, never more to be restored to them, no wonder that their grief was more than common grief!

They would have withheld the mother from coming in; but when they could not, they all bore her company. The poor lady but just cast her eye upon the coffin, and then retiring with passionate grief towards the window, cried, with clasped hands, "Oh, my child, my child! thou pride of my hope! why was I not permitted to speak pardon and peace to thee? Oh, forgive thy cruel mother!"

Her son—his heart then softened—besought her to withdraw; and her woman looking in at that moment, he called her to assist him in conducting her lady. His father yielded to my entreaties to withdraw, and I attended him to the parlour, endeavouring to console him. His lady was in agonies. He made a motion towards her. "Oh, my dear," said he—but turning short, his eyes full, he hastened out, and desired me to leave him to himself.

The uncles and the sister looked and turned away, very often upon the emblems, in silent sorrow. Mrs. Hervey would have read to them the inscription—these words she

did read, "*Here the wicked cease from troubling,*" but could read no farther ; her tears fell in large drops upon the plate she was contemplating.

Judge you, Mr. Belford (for you have great humanity), how *I* must be affected. Yet was I forced to try to comfort them all.

Here I will close this letter. I am altogether indisposed for rest, but I have more melancholy scenes to paint.

My servant, in his way to you with this, shall call at St. Alban's upon the good woman, that he may inform you how she does. Miss Arabella asked me after her when I withdrew. She was much concerned at the bad way we left her in.

No wonder that the dear departed, who foresaw the remorse that would fall to the lot of this unhappy family when they came to have the news of her death confirmed to them, was so grieved for their apprehended grief, and endeavoured to comfort them by her posthumous letters.

I am, dear sir,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

WM. MORDEN.

(Colonel Morden, *in continuation.*)

WHEN the unhappy mourners were all retired, I directed the lid of the coffin to be unscrewed, and caused some fresh aromatics and flowers to be put into it.

The corpse was very little altered, notwithstanding the journey. The sweet smile remained.

The maids who brought the flowers were ambitious of strewing them about it ; they poured forth fresh lamentations over her, each wishing she had been so happy as to have been allowed to attend her in London. One of them particularly, who is, it seems, my cousin Arabella's personal servant, was more clamorous in her grief than any of the rest, and the moment she turned her back all the others allowed she had reason for it. I inquired afterwards about her, and found that this creature was set over my dear cousin, when she was confined to her chamber by indiscreet severity.

When my cousins were told that the lid was unscrewed, they pressed in again, all but the mournful father and mother. Mrs. Hervey kissed her pale lips, " Flower of the world ! " was all she could say, and gave place to Miss Arabella, who, kissing the forehead of her whom she had so

cruelly treated, could only say, to my cousin James, looking upon the corpse and upon him, "Oh brother!" While he taking the fair lifeless hand, kissed it, and retreated with precipitation.

Her uncles seemed to wait each other's example, whether to look upon the corpse or not. I ordered the lid to be replaced, and then they pressed forward to take a last farewell of the casket which so lately contained so rich a jewel.

Then it was that the grief of each found fluent expression, and the fair corpse was addressed with all the tenderness that the sincerest love could inspire; each according to their different degrees of relationship. "She was questionless happy. That sweet smile betokened *her* being so. *Themselves* most unhappy." And then once more the brother took the lifeless hand, and vowed revenge upon it, on the cursed author of all this distress.

When all were withdrawn, I retired, and sent for my cousin James, and acquainted him with his sister's request in relation to the discourse to be pronounced at her interment; telling him how necessary it was that the minister should have the earliest notice given him that the case would admit; he lamented the death of the Reverend Dr. Lewen, who, as he said, was a great admirer of his sister, and would have been the fittest of all men for that office.

Mr. Melvill, Dr. Lewen's assistant, must, he said, be the man; and he promised to engage him in the morning.

His sister was of his opinion. So I left this to them,

They both, with no little warmth, hinted their disapprobation of you, sir, for their sister's executor, on the score of your intimate friendship with the author of her ruin.

You must not resent anything I shall communicate to you of what they say on this occasion; depending that you will not, I shall write with the greater freedom.

I told them how much my dear cousin was obliged to your friendship and humanity, the injunctions she had laid you under, and your own inclination to observe them. I said you were a man of honour, that you were desirous of consulting me, because you would not willingly give offence to any of them; and that I was very fond of cultivating your favour and correspondence.

They said, there was no need of an executor out of their family; and they hoped that you would relinquish so *unnecessary* a trust, as they called it.

I showed them their sister's posthumous letter to you; in which she confesses her obligations, and regard for you,

and your future welfare. They were extremely affected with the perusal of it.

They were surprised that I had given up to you the produce of her grandfather's estate. I told them that they must thank themselves if anything disagreeable to them occurred from their sister's devise, deserted as she had been.

They said they would report all I had said to their father and mother; adding, that great as their trouble was, they found they had more still to come.

Monday morning, between 8 and 9 o'clock.

THE unhappy family are preparing for a mournful meeting at breakfast. Mr. Melvill has promised to draw up a brief eulogium on the deceased. Miss Howe is expected here to see, for the last time, her beloved friend.

Miss Howe, by her messenger, says she shall not tarry six minutes.

I am, sir, your faithful humble servant,

WILLIAM MORDEN.

(Colonel Morden, *in continuation.*)

Monday afternoon, September 11th.

SIR,

WE are such bad company here to one another, that it is some relief to write.

I was summoned to breakfast half after nine. By the time we were seated, the bell ringing, the outward gate opening, a chariot rattling over the pavement of the courtyard put them into emotion.

I left them, and was just time enough to give Miss Howe my hand as she alighted.

I saw Miss Howe. She is a graceful young lady. A fixed melancholy overclouded a vivacity and fire, which, nevertheless, darted now and then through the gloom. I shall ever respect her for her love to my dear cousin.

She entered with me the little parlour, and seeing the coffin, with impatience pushed aside the lid, and she removed the face-cloth. She clasped her hands, now looking upon the corpse, now to Heaven. Her bosom heaved and fluttered, and at last she broke silence. "Oh, sir; see you not here the glory of her sex—*thus*—laid low?"

"Oh, my friend!" said she, "my sweet companion!" kissing her at every tender appellation. "And is this all of my Clarissa?"

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"But *can* she be really dead? Oh no! She only sleeps. Awake, my beloved! My friend, awake! Let thy Anna Howe revive thee," kissing her again.

* * * *

Then, with an air, as if disappointed that she answered not, "And art thou really and indeed flown from thine Anna Howe? Oh, my unkind Clarissa!"

"Forgive, Mr. Morden," said she, "this frenzy. I am not myself. I never shall be. You knew not the excellence that is laid low. This cannot, surely, be all of my Clarissa's story.

* * * *

"Oh for a tear to ease my bursting heart!"

* * * *

Again she kissed her lips, cheeks, and forehead; sighing as if her heart would break.

Looking round her, apprehensive of seeing some of the family—"One more kiss, my angel; let me fly this house. Adieu, dearest Clarissa. Thou art happy. Oh, may we meet and rejoice where no villainous Lovelace, no hard relations will ruffle our felicity." A flood of tears came to her relief. "But for this relief my heart would have burst. Excuse me, sir, I loved her as never woman loved another."

* * * *

Then looking round her, on a servant's stepping by the door, as if again she apprehended it was some of the family, "Once more," said she, "a solemn, an everlasting adieu! alas for *me*!" And again embracing the face of the dear deceased, she gave me her hand, and, quitting the room with precipitation, rushed into her chariot. When there, and a fresh burst of tears, she bowed her head to me, and was driven away.

The recollection of this affecting scene has left me unable to proceed.

I am, sir, your obedient, humble servant,
W MORDEN.

* * * *

THE good Mrs. Norton has arrived.

* * * *

The will is not to be looked in till the funeral is over. Family and servants are all in close mourning.

I have seen Mr. Melvill. He is a serious and sensible man. I find he is extremely well acquainted with the whole unhappy story, and was a personal admirer of my dear cousin, and a sincere lamenter of her misfortunes.

I supported the unhappy father, Mrs. Norton the sinking mother, into the next parlour. She threw herself on a settee there; he into an elbow-chair by her; the good woman at her feet, her arms clasped round her waist. The two mothers, as I may call them, of my beloved cousin thus tenderly engaged! What a variety of distress in these woeful scenes!

(Colonel Morden, *in continuation.*)

Thursday night, September 14th.

WE are just returned from the solemnization of the last mournful rite. My cousin James and his sister, Mr. and Mrs. Hervey and *their* daughter (a young lady whose affection for my departed cousin shall ever bind me to her), my cousins John and Antony Harlowe, myself, and some distant relations, who, to testify their respect to the memory of the dear deceased, had put themselves in mourning, self-invited, attended it.

The father and mother would have joined in these last honours had they been able to do so.

* * * *

Harlowe Place is distant half a mile from the church. All the way the corpse was attended by numbers of people.

It entered the church at nine. The eulogy pronounced was very pathetic. When Mr. Melvill pointed to the pew where she used to sit, every one turned to it, and many eyes ran over when he mentioned her charities.

Her *poor*, chosen for their honesty and industry, paid their last attendance and crowded round the coffin.

The good divine just touched upon the unhappy step that was the cause of her untimely fate, and very politely touched upon the noble disdain she showed to join interests with a man whom she found unworthy. But what he insisted upon most was the happy end she made.

When the corpse was to be carried to the vault, two gentlemen pressed forward, Mr. Mullins and Mr. Wyerley, professed admirers of my dear cousin.

It is said that Mr. Solmes was in a remote part of the church, wrapped in a horseman's coat, and that he shed tears several times, but I saw him not.

Another gentleman there incognito showed great emotion when the coffin was carried to its last place; this was Mr. Hickman.

Miss Harlowe was extremely affected. She would go down with the corpse of her dear sister, she said; but her brother would not permit it.

The corpse was deposited as directed at the feet of her grandfather.

Here I left the beloved remains, having taken my own place by the side of the coffin.

(Mr. James Harlowe to Belford.)

Harlowe Place, *Friday night, September 15th.*

SIR,

I HOPE from the character my worthy cousin Morden gives you that you will excuse the application I make to oblige a family in an affair that much concerns their peace, and cannot equally concern anybody else.

We shall all think ourselves extremely obliged to you if you please to relinquish this trust to our own family.

First, because she never would have had the thought of troubling you, sir, if she had believed any of her near relations would have taken it upon themselves.

Secondly, I understand that she recommends to you to trust to the honour of any of our family for the performance of such of the articles as are of a domestic nature. We are all of us willing to stake our honours upon this occasion.

We are the more concerned, sir, to wish you to decline this office because of your short and accidental knowledge of the dear testatrix, and long and intimate acquaintance with the man to whom *she* owed her ruin, and *we* the greatest loss and disappointment (her manifold excellencies considered) that ever befell a family.

You will allow due weight, I dare say, to this plea, if you make our case your own, and so much the readier when I assure you that your interfering in this matter so much against our inclinations (excuse, sir, my plain dealing) will very probably occasion an opposition in some points where otherwise there might be none.

What therefore I propose is, not that my father should assume this trust—he is too much afflicted to undertake it—nor yet myself—I might be thought too much concerned in interest; but that it may be allowed to devolve upon my two

uncles whose known honour, and whose affection to the dear deceased, nobody ever doubted. And they will treat with you, sir, through my cousin Morden, as to the points they will undertake to perform.

Your compliance, sir, will oblige a family, who have already distress enough upon them, in the circumstance that occasions this application to you ; and more particularly, sir,

Your most humble servant,

JAMES HARLOWE, Jun.

I send this by one of my servants, who will attend your dispatch.

(Belford to Mr. James Harlowe, Jun.)

Saturday, September 16th.

SIR,

You will excuse my plain dealing, for I must observe that if I had *not* the just opinion I have of the sacred nature of the office I have undertaken, some passages in the letter you have favoured me with, would convince me that I ought not to excuse myself from acting in it.

First you are pleased to say that your uncles, if the trust be relinquished to them, will *treat with me*, through Colonel Morden, *as to the points they will undertake to perform*.

Permit me, sir, to say, that it is the *duty* of an executor to see every point performed that can be performed.

Occasions of offence shall not proceed from me. Colonel Morden shall command me in everything that the will allows me to oblige your family in. I am as unwilling to obtrude myself upon it as any of you can wish.

When you have coolly considered everything, I hope you will see there can be no room for dispute.

Your humble servant,

JOHN BELFORD.

THE WILL.*

I, CLARISSA HARLOWE, now by strange melancholy accidents lodging in the parish of St. Paul, Covent Garden, being of sound and perfect mind and memory, as I hope these presents, drawn up by myself, and written with my own hand, will testify, do, this second day of September, in the year of our Lord ———, make and publish this my last will and testament, in manner and form following:—

In the first place, I desire that my body may lie unburied three days after my decease, or till the pleasure of my father be known concerning it. But I will not on any account that it be opened; and it is my desire that it shall not be touched but by those of my own sex.

I have always requested that my body might be deposited in the family vault of my ancestors. I could wish that it might be placed at the feet of my honoured grandfather. But as I have, by one unhappy step, been thought to disgrace my lineage, and this last honour may be refused my corpse, my desire is that it may be interred in the churchyard of the parish in which I shall die, and in the most private manner, between the hours of eleven and twelve at night, attended only by Mrs. Lovick, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, and their maid.

I have given verbal directions that after I am dead I may be put in my coffin as soon as possible, and not be exposed to anybody, except any of my relations should vouchsafe to look upon me.

And I could wish, if it might be avoided without making ill-will between Mr. Lovelace and my executor, that the former might not be permitted to see my corpse. But if, as he is a man very uncontrollable, and as I am nobody's, he insist upon viewing *her dead*, whom he once before saw in a manner dead, let his gay curiosity be gratified. Let him behold and triumph over the wretched remains of one who has been made a victim to his barbarous perfidy.

And with regard to the worldly matters which appertain to me by the will of my said grandfather, or otherwise, thus do I dispose of them:—I give and bequeath all the real estates in or to which I have any claim or title by the said will, to my ever-honoured father James Harlowe, Esq., and that rather than to my brother and sister, to whom I had

once thoughts of devising them, because, if they survive my father, those estates will assuredly vest in them, or one of them, by virtue of his favour, as they may respectively merit by the continuance of their duty.

The house, called the Grove, and the furniture thereof (the pictures and large iron chest of old plate excepted), I bequeath to my said father; begging it as a favour that he will be pleased to permit my dear Mrs. Norton to pass the remainder of her days in that house, in the apartments known as "the housekeeper's apartments," with the furniture in them, which was bought for me by my grandfather. I am the more earnest in this, as I once thought to have been very happy there with the good woman.

With regard to what has accrued from that estate since my grandfather's death, together with the management and produce of the whole estate devised to me—these sums I hope I may be allowed to dispose of absolutely.

My grandfather was pleased to bequeath to me all the family pictures. All these said pictures I bequeath to my uncle John Harlowe, not including my own, drawn at fourteen years of age.

My said honoured grandfather having a great fondness for the old family plate, having left the same to me, with power to bequeath it to whomsoever I pleased: this family plate, which is deposited in an iron chest, in the strong room at his late dwelling-house, I bequeath to my honoured uncle Antony Harlowe, Esq.

I bequeath to my ever-valued friend Mrs. Judith Norton the sum of six hundred pounds.

I bequeath also to her thirty guineas, for mourning, for her and her son, my foster-brother.

To my aunt, Mrs. Dorothy Hervey, I bequeath the sum of fifty guineas, for a ring; and I beg of her to accept of my thankful acknowledgements for her patience with me in the several altercations that happened before my unhappy departure from Harlowe Place.

To my kind cousin, Miss Dolly Hervey, I bequeath my watch and equipage, and my best Mechlin and Brussels head-dresses and ruffles; also my gown and petticoat of flowered silver, of my own work, which I never wore; as also to the same I bequeath my harpsichord, my chamber-organ, and all my music-books.

I bequeath all my books to my cousin Dolly Hervey. And also twenty-five guineas for a ring, to be worn in remembrance of her true friend.

If I live not to see my cousin William Morden, I desire my grateful thanks to him for his goodness to me, and I beg him to accept from me two or three trifles, and a little miniature picture set in gold, which his father made me sit for to the famous Italian master whom he brought over with him.

To the same gentleman I bequeath my rose diamond ring.

I humbly request the mother of my dear Miss Howe to accept from me a ring of twenty-five guineas price.

My picture at full length, in my late grandfather's closet, I bequeath to that sister of my heart, Miss Howe.

I bequeath to the same dear friend my best diamond ring, with other jewels.

My whole-length picture in the Vandyke taste, I bequeath to my aunt Hervey, except my mother shall think fit to keep it herself.

I bequeath to Charles Hickman, Esq., the locket with the miniature picture of the lady he best loves.

I make it my earnest request to my dear Miss Howe, that she will not put herself into mourning for me. But I desire her acceptance of a ring with my hair; and that Mr. Hickman will also accept of the like; each of the value of twenty-five guineas.

I bequeath to Lady Betty Lawrance, and to her sister Lady Sarah Sadleir, and to the Right Honourable Lord M., and Miss Charlotte and Miss Martha Montague, each an enamelled ring, with a cypher Cl. H., with my hair in crystal, and round the inside of each the day, month, and year of my death, as a token of the grateful sense I have of the honour of their good opinion and kind wishes.

To the Reverend Dr. Arthur Lewen I bequeath twenty guineas for a ring.

To my late maid Hannah Burton, a faithful creature, I bequeath fifty pounds; and if ill health continue, I commend her to my good Mrs. Norton.

[Legacies are also left to all the family servants, even to Betty Barnes, and five pounds to the "Helper." All her wearing apparel is left to Mrs. Norton; twenty guineas each to Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Lovick; and all her linen and laces to be divided between them, as well as legacies to Mr. Smith, nurse Shelburn, and Catherine the maid; with various other mementoes to people who had done her kindnesses, including ten guineas to the poor of the parish, in case her body be "permitted to be carried down to Harlowe Place."

Her diamond necklace, solitaire, and shoe buckles, as well as her set of jewels left her by her grandfather, she desires may be sent to her executor to be disposed of and applied to the uses of her will, unless her family desire to purchase the jewels.]

[The Will concludes thus :—

There are a set of honest, indigent people whom I used to call *My Poor*, and to whom Mrs. Norton conveys relief each month, from a sum I deposited in her hands. *Now*, that my fault may be as little aggravated as possible by the sufferings of the worthy people whom Heaven gave me a heart to relieve, it is my will and desire that a fund be appropriated from the produce of my grandfather's estate, for their benefit, under the direction of Mrs. Norton. In case of her death, my dear Miss Howe will take it upon herself.

[Finally, again recommending herself to the mercy of God, Clarissa puts her name to her will, which is

Signed, sealed, published, and declared, the day and year above written, by the said Clarissa Harlowe, as her last will and testament, contained in seven sheets of paper, all written with her own hand, and every sheet signed and sealed by herself, in the presence of us,

JOHN WILLIAMS,
ARTHUR BEDALL,
ELIZABETH SWANTON.

(Colonel Morden to Belford.)

Saturday, September 16th.

I HAVE been employed in a melancholy task—in reading the will of the dear deceased.

The unhappy mother and Mrs. Norton were absent; but Mrs. Harlowe made it her request that every article of it should be fulfilled.

The first words, “I, Clarissa Harlowe, now by strange, melancholy accidents, lodging,” &c., drew tears from some, sighs from all.

When I read the direction, “That her body was not to be viewed, except any of her relations should *vouchsafe to look upon her*,” the father wrung his hands.

I was obliged to stop at the words, “That she was *Nobody's*.”

When the article was read which bequeathed to the father the grandfather's estate, her father could sit no longer, but withdrew.

But the clothes, the thirty guineas for mourning to Mrs. Norton, with the recommendation of the good woman for

housekeeper at The Grove, were thought sufficient, had the article of six hundred pounds, which was called monstrous by the brother and sister, been omitted.

And Cousin Dolly Hervey was grudging the library. Miss Harlowe said, "that as she and her sister never bought the same books, she would take that to herself, and would *make it up* to her Cousin Dolly *one way or other*."

Mrs. Hervey could hardly keep her seat on *this* occasion.

Mr. John and Mr. Antony Harlowe were much affected with the articles in their favour, without a word of reproach.

The mutual upbraidings and grief of all present so often interrupted me that the reading took up above six hours.

Enough passed to convince me that my cousin was absolutely right in her choice of an executor out of the family.

(Belford to the Right Hon. Lord M.)

London, September 14th.

MY LORD,

I AM very apprehensive that the affair between Mr. Lovelace and the late Miss Clarissa Harlowe will be attended with further bad consequences, notwithstanding her dying injunctions to the contrary. I would therefore humbly propose that your lordship will forward the purpose your kinsman lately had to go abroad. But as he will not stir, if he know the motives of your wishes, the avowed inducement may be such as respects his health of person and mind.

I am glad to hear that he is in a way of recovery. I think no time should be lost.

(Miss Montague to Belford.)

M. Hall, Friday, September 15th.

SIR,

MY lord having the gout, I am commanded to inform you, that before your letter came, Mr. Lovelace was preparing for a foreign tour. We shall endeavour to hasten him away on the motives you suggest.

We are all extremely affected with the dear lady's death.

Everybody is assured that you will do all in your power to prevent *further* ill consequences from this melancholy affair. My lord desires his compliments to you.

I am, sir,

Your humble servant,

CH. MONTAGUE.

(Extracts from Clarissa's last letter to Lovelace.)

"I TOLD you you should have a letter sent you, when I had got to my father's house.

"Lovelace, I do forgive you. To say I once respected you with a preference, is what I blush to own, though I little thought that you could be what you proved yourself; but indeed I have long been greatly above you, for from my heart I have despised you and your ways, ever since I saw what manner of man you were.

* * * *

"Hear me, Lovelace, as one speaking from the dead. Lose no time. Set about your repentance instantly.

"Whenever you shall be inclined to consult the Sacred Oracles, you will find doctrines which a penitent heart may lay hold of for its consolation, and may you be enabled to escape the fate denounced against the abandoned man, and entitled to the mercies of a gracious God, is the prayer of

"CLARISSA HARLOWE."

(Lovelace to Belford.)

M. Hall, *Thursday, September 14th.*

EVER since the fatal seventh of this month I have been lost to all the joys of life. Till that cursed day I had some gleams of hope.

They tell me of an odd letter I wrote to you. Very little of the contents do I remember.

I have been in a cursed way. What I have suffered, and do suffer, passes all description!

Here I, who was the barbarous cause of the loss of senses for a week together to the most inimitable of women, have been punished with the loss of my own. When, O when, shall I know a joyful hour?

I am kept excessively low. This sweet creature's excellencies rise up hourly to my remembrance.

I find my head strangely working again. Pen, begone!

Friday, September 15th.

I RESUME, in a sprightly vein, I hope—Mowbray and Tourville—

But what of Mowbray and Tourville? What's the world? What's anybody in it?

They are highly exasperated against thee . . . O Belford! Belford! I shall never more be what I was!

What a wretch was I, to be so distinguished by her, and yet to be so unworthy of her hope to reclaim me!

Why did she write this letter, and direct it to be given me when an event the most deplorable had taken place, but for my good. And *when* was this letter written? Was it not at the time when her soul was bowed down by calamity and persecution; and herself denied all forgiveness from relations the most implacable?

All I took pen to write for, is unwritten. It was to wish you to proceed with your communications, as usual.

* * * *

I will quit this kingdom. Now my *Clarissa* is no more, what is there in it worth living for?

The accursed *Sinclair* they tell me, has broken her leg. I have had it several times in my head to set fire to the execrable house, and watch that not a devil escape the flames.

They govern me as a child in strings. I suffer so much in my fever, that I am willing to bear with them, till I can get tolerably well.

'Tis a folly to deny it, I have been quite distraught.

Thine, LOVELACE.

How my heart sickens at looking back upon what I was! *All* my visitors, low-born, tiptoe attendants; even those never approaching me but periodically, inquiring how I was, and how I took their execrable potions, whispering too! What a cursed still life!

(Lovelace to Belford.)

I AM preparing to leave this kingdom. *Mowbray* and *Tourville* promise to give me their company in a month or two.

I shall first to *Paris*; and thence to some of the German courts; thence to *Vienna*; and descend through *Bavaria* and the *Tyrol* to *Venice*, where I shall keep the carnival. To *Florence* and *Turin*, again over *Mount Cenis* to *France*, and again to *Paris*.

I verily think thy penitence cannot hold. Strong habits are not easily rooted out. *Satan* has had too much benefit from thy services to let thee easily out of his clutches.

Thou hast made good resolutions. Nevertheless, the devil and thy time of life are against thee. And if thou failest,

thou wilt become the scoff of men and the triumph of devils.

I am mad again, by Jupiter ! Farewell.

Thy LOVELACE.

Remember that you never got me the copy of my beloved's will.

(Lovelace to Belford, *in continuation.*)

ALL gloom at heart, by Jupiter ! although the pen and the countenance assume airs of levity ! If, after all, thou canst so easily reform, if thou canst shake off thy old sins, and if thy old master will so readily dismiss so faithful a servant, and if at last (thy reformation warranted) thou marriest, and livest honest ; why, Belford, I cannot but say thou standest a good chance to be a happy man !

I think, as I told thee in my last, that the devil knows his own interest too well to let thee off so easily. Thou thyself tellest me that we cannot repent when we will. And indeed I found it so ; for, in my lucid intervals, I made good resolutions. But as health turned its blithe side to me, and opened my prospects of recovery, all my old inclinations returned ; and this letter, perhaps, will be a thorough conviction to thee that I *am* as wild a fellow as ever.

Thou askest me if thy new scheme be not infinitely preferable to any of those which we have so long pursued ? Why, Jack, I can't say but it is. It is really, as Biddy in the play says, a good, comfortable scheme.

Thou wert always a true Englishman, Belford. I never started a roguery that did not come out of *thy* forge in a manner ready anvilled and hammered for execution, when I have sometimes been at a loss to make anything of it myself.

Even in this affair, art thou so innocent as thou fanciest thyself ? Thou wilt stare at this. . . Thou sayest thou wouldst have saved the lady from the ruin she met with. What methods didst thou *take* to save her ?

Thou knewest my designs all along. Hadst thou a mind to make thyself a good title to the merit to which thou now pretendest to lay claim, thou shouldst, like a true knight-errant, have sought to set the lady free from the enchanted castle. Thou shouldst have apprised her of her danger, have stolen in when the giant was out of the way ; or, hadst thou had the true spirit of chivalry upon thee, and nothing else would have done, have killed the giant ; and then something wouldst thou have had to brag of.

“O, but the giant was my friend; he reposed a confidence in me; and I should have betrayed him!” Try this plea upon thy present principles, and thou wilt see what a caitiff thou wert to let it have weight with thee, upon an occasion where a breach of confidence is more excusable than to keep the secret.

Thou canst not pretend, and I know thou wilt not, that thou wert afraid of thy life by taking such a measure; for a braver fellow lives not, nor a more fearless, than Jack Belford.

I believe I should have killed thee at the *time*, hadst thou betrayed me. But I am sure *now* that I would have thanked thee for it with all my heart, and thought thee my best friend.

* * * *

I am employed in taking leave of my friends.

Next Monday I think to see you in town. Then you and I, and Mowbray and Tourville, will laugh off that evening together. They will accompany me (as I expect *you* will) to Dover. I must leave you and them friends. They take amiss the treatment you have given them in your last letters. I laugh at them . . .

Thou talkest of a wife, Jack. What thinkest thou of our Charlotte? Charlotte is a smart girl. For piety (thy present turn) I cannot say much. Would flaunt a little, I believe, like the rest of them. . . But it won't do, neither, now I think of it. Thou art so homely a creature! People would think she had picked thee up in Wapping, or Rotherhithe, or going to view the docks at Chatham or Portsmouth.

I am serious, Jack.

R. L.

(Belford to Colonel Morden.)

Thursday, September 21st.

GIVE me leave, dear sir, to address myself to you in a very solemn manner on a subject I cannot dispense with; as I promised the divine lady I would do everything in my power to prevent further mischief—of which she was so apprehensive.

It is with great concern that I have just now heard of a declaration which you are said to have made to your relations at Harlowe Place, that you will not rest till you have avenged your cousin's wrongs upon Mr. Lovelace.

Far be it from me to offer to defend the unhappy man. Yet I must say, that the family, by their persecutions of the

dear lady at first, and their implacableness afterwards, ought to *share* the blame with him.

When I have the pleasure of seeing you next, I will acquaint you, sir, with all the circumstances of this melancholy story, from which you will see that Mr. Lovelace was extremely illtreated at first by the whole family, this admirable lady excepted. This exception, I know, heightens his crime; but as he became so earnest a suppliant to her for marriage, and as he has suffered so deplorably in the loss of his reason, for not having it in his power to repair her wrongs, I presume to hope that much is to be pleaded against such a resolution as you are said to have made.

Let me entreat you to read once more the posthumous letter written to yourself, and *that* to her brother.

I think, sir, they are unanswerable.

Let me *also* remind you of your own promise to your departing cousin; relying upon which, her last moments were the easier.

Reflect: *she* forgives the injury. Why should we not endeavour to imitate what we admire?

You asked me, sir, when in town, if a brave man could be a premeditatedly base one? *Generally speaking*, I believe bravery and baseness are incompatible. But Mr. Lovelace's character, in the instance before us, affords a proof of the truth of the common observation, that there is no general rule but has its exceptions.

Excuse me, sir, for the sake of my executorial duty keeping in eye the dear lady's *personal injunctions and will*, every article of which she would have dispensed with, rather than that further mischief should happen on her account.

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate and faithful servant,

J. BELFORD.

[In this posthumous letter of Clarissa to Colonel Morden, written before his visit to her, and thanking him for all his goodness to her, she implores him not to suffer active resentment against Lovelace to "take place in his generous breast on her account."]

"Leave him," she says, "to repentance. Let no one say Clarissa Harlowe is avenged in his fall, or in case of yours, that her fault, instead of being buried in the grave, is aggravated by a loss greater than that of herself."

"Be a comforter," she concludes, "to my dear parents." And may we meet in a blessed eternity.

"Your affectionate

"C. HARLOWE."

(Extracts—Colonel Morden to Mr. Belford.)

I HAVE indeed expressed myself with vehemence on this occasion. If ever I am stimulated by my imperfections and my resentments to act against my judgment and my cousin's injunctions, some such reflections as these that follow will run away with my reason. Indeed they are always present with me.

[He then expatiates on the base and deliberate plots and contrivances resorted to by Lovelace to decoy poor Clarissa first from home, then to London into the hands of his wicked accomplices—in short, through the whole premeditated and shocking transaction, with its miserable result to his lamented cousin, much having reached his ears to which he had been a stranger before Clarissa's death. He therefore considers himself absolved from his promise not to avenge her.]

(Colonel Morden to Belford.)

Tuesday, September 26th.

DEAR SIR,

I CANNOT help congratulating myself as well as you, that we have already got through every article of the will.

You left me discretionary power, in many instances. In pursuance of it, I have had my dear cousin's jewels valued, and will account to you for them at the highest price, when I come to town, as well as for other matters that you were pleased to entrust to my management.

These jewels I have presented to my cousin Dolly Hervey, in acknowledgment of her love to the dear departed. I have told Miss Howe of this, and she is as well pleased with what I have done as if she had been the purchaser of them herself. As that young lady has jewels of her own, she could only have wished to purchase these because they were her beloved friend's.

The grandmother's jewels are also valued, and the money will be paid me for you.

Mrs. Norton is preparing, by general consent, to enter upon her office as housekeeper at *the Grove*. But it is my opinion that she will not be long on this side heaven.

I waited upon Miss Howe myself, as I told you I would, with what was bequeathed to her and her mother.

Miss Howe is open, generous, noble. The mother has not any of her fine qualities.

There is something so charmingly brilliant and frank in Miss Howe's disposition, although at present overclouded

by grief, that it is impossible not to love her, even for her failings.

I found her and her own maid in deep mourning. This, it seems, had occasioned a great debate between her mother and her. Her mother had the words of the will on her side, and Mr. Hickman's interest in her view; her daughter having said that she would wear it for six months at least. But the young lady carried her point. "Strange," said she, "if I, who shall mourn the heavy, the irreparable loss to the last hour of my life, should not show my concern to the world for a few months!"

You will excuse me, Mr. Belford, for the particularities which you invited and encouraged.

I hope soon to pay my respects to you in town. Meantime I am, with great respect, dear sir,

Your faithful and affectionate humble servant,

WM. MORDEN.

(Belford to Miss Howe.)

I SEND you, madam, a letter from Lord M. to myself, and the copies of three others written in consequence of that. These will acquaint you with Mr. Lovelace's departure from England, and with other particulars, which you will be curious to know.

Be pleased to keep to yourself such of the contents as your own prudence will suggest to you ought not to be seen by anybody else.

I am, madam, with the profoundest and most grateful respect,

Your faithful and obliged humble servant,

JOHN BELFORD.

(Lord M. to Belford.)

M. Hall, *Friday, September 29th.*

DEAR SIR,

MY kinsman Lovelace is now setting out for London; proposing to see you, and then to go to Dover, and so embark. God send him well out of the kingdom!

On Monday he will be with you, I believe. What I write for is, to wish you to keep Colonel Morden and him asunder; and so I give you notice of his going to town. I should be very loth there should be any mischief between them, as you gave me notice that the Colonel threatened my nephew. But my kinsman would not bear that; so nobody must let

him know that he did. I hope there is no fear: for the Colonel does not, as I hear, threaten now.

We shall all here miss the wild fellow. There is no better company when he pleases.

If you ever travel thirty or forty miles, I should be glad to see you at M. Hall. It will be charity when my kinsman is gone; for we suppose you will be his chief correspondent. God preserve us all. Amen.

Your very humble servant,

M.

(Belford to Lord M.)

London, *Tuesday night, October 3rd.*

MY LORD,

I OBEY your lordship's commands with great pleasure.

Yesterday Mr. Lovelace made me a visit at my lodgings. As I was in expectation of one from Colonel Morden, I thought proper to carry him to a tavern which neither of us frequented, ordering notice to be sent me if the Colonel came.

Mr. Lovelace is *too well recovered*, I was going to say. I never saw him more lively and handsome.

* * * *

It struck three before I could get him into a serious way, so natural is his gaiety of heart. His conversation you know, my lord, when his heart is free, runs off to the bottom without any dregs.

But when we thought of parting, he became more serious, and then gave me a plan of his intended tour, wishing heartily I could have accompanied him.

We parted at four.

I had a message from him this morning, desiring me to name a place at which to dine with him, and Mowbray, and Tourville for the last time. And soon after another from Colonel Morden, inviting me to pass the evening with him at the Bedford Head in Covent Garden. That I might keep them at distance from one another, I appointed Mr. Lovelace at the Eagle in Suffolk Street.

There I met him and the two others. We began very high with each other; but, at last, all was made up, and he offered to forget and forgive everything, on condition that I would correspond with him while abroad.

* * * *

It was with much reluctance they let me go, they little thought to whom.

I found the Colonel in a very solemn way.

I wish Mr. Lovelace could have been prevailed upon to take any other tour than that of France and Italy. I did propose Madrid to him; but he laughed at me.

(Belford to Lord M.)

Wednesday night, October 4th.

MY LORD,

I AM just returned from attending Mr. Lovelace as far as Gad's Hill, near Rochester. He was exceeding gay all the way. Mowbray and Tourville are gone on with him. They will see him embark, and promise to follow him in a month or two; for they say there is no living without him, now he is once more himself.

He and I parted with great and even solemn tokens of affection; but yet not without gay intermixtures, as I will acquaint your lordship.

Taking me aside, and clasping his hands about me, "Adieu, dear Belford," said he; "may you proceed in the course you have entered upon. Whatever airs I give myself, this charming creature has fast hold of me *here*," clapping his hand upon his heart, "and I must either appear what you see me, or be what I so lately was.

"But if I live to come to England, and you remain fixed in your present way, I hope rather to follow your example than to ridicule you for it. This will" (for I had given him a copy of it) "I will make the companion of my solitary hours.

"Thou art in mourning now, Jack, as well as I; but if ever thy turn lead thee again to be Beau-Brocade, I will *bedizen* thee, as the girls say, on my return, to my own fancy, and according to thy own *natural appearance*. Thou shalt doctor my soul, and I will doctor thy body; thou shalt see what a clever fellow I will make of thee.

"And now, thou sorrowful monkey, adieu, and when thou thinkest thou hast made thyself an interest out yonder (looking up), then put in a word for thy Lovelace."

And so we parted.

I hope, my lord, we shall see him soon return, and reform, as he promises.

I return your lordship my humble thanks for the honour of your invitation to M. Hall. The first letter I receive from Mr. Lovelace shall give me the opportunity of embracing it.

I am, my lord,

Your most faithful and obedient servant,

J. BELFORD.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Paris.

I OUGHT to have written to you sooner, but I loitered two days at Calais for an answer to a letter I wrote to engage my former travelling valet, De la Tour, an ingenious, ready fellow, as you have heard me say. I have engaged him, and he is now with me.

I shall make no stay here, but intend for some of the electoral courts. That of Bavaria, I think, will engage me longest. Perhaps I may step out of my way to those of Dresden and Berlin; and it is not impossible that you may have one letter from me at Vienna. And then perhaps I may fall down into Italy by the Tyrol; and so, taking Turin in my way, return to Paris, where I hope to see Mowbray and Tourville. Nor do I despair of you.

This a good deal differs from the plan I gave you. But you may expect to hear from me as I move, and whether I shall pursue this route or the other.

I have my former lodgings in the Rue St. Antoine, which I shall hold, notwithstanding my tour. So they will be ready to accommodate any two of you, if you come hither before my return; and for this I have conditioned.

I write to Charlotte; and that is writing to all my relations at once.

Do thou, Jack, inform me duly of everything that passes: whether thou hast any chance for a wife; how the Harlowes proceed in their penitentials; if Miss Howe be married. Be sure be very minute: for every trifling occurrence relating to those we value becomes interesting; when we are at a distance from them.

Thy LOVELACE.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

London, *October 25th.*

I WRITE to show you that I am incapable of slighting even the minutest requests of an absent and distant friend. Yet you may believe that there cannot be any great alterations in the little time that you have been out of England, with respect to the subjects of your inquiry. Nevertheless I will answer to each for the reason above given; and for the reason you mention, that even trifles and chit-chat are agreeable from friend to friend.

First, then, as to my reformation scheme, I hope I go on well. When I look back upon the sweep that has been made

among us in the two or three past years, and upon what may still happen, I hardly think myself secure; though of late I have been guided by other lights than those which have hurried so many of our confraternity into ruin.

I am very earnest in my wishes to be admitted into the nuptial state. But I think I ought to pass some time as a probationary, till, by steadiness in my good resolutions, I can convince some woman, whom I could love and honour, that there is *one* libertine who had the grace to reform before age or disease put it out of *his* power to sin on.

The Harlowes continue inconsolable; and I dare say will to the end of their lives.

Miss Howe is not yet married; but I have reason to think will soon. I have the honour of corresponding with her; and the more I know of her, the more I admire the nobleness of her mind.

As to Mowbray and Tourville, what novelties can be expected from men who have not the sense to pursue new lights either good or bad, now that you are gone who were the soul of enterprise and in particular their soul. Besides, I see them but seldom. I suppose they will be at Paris before you return from Germany, for they cannot live without you, and you gave them such a specimen of your recovered sociality in the last evening's conversation as delighted them and much concerned me.

I wish with all my heart thou wouldst bend thy course towards the Pyrenees. I should then, if thou writest to my cousin Charlotte, see some account of thy tour.

BELFORD.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Paris, *October 16th to 27th.*

I FOLLOW my last of the 11th, on occasion of a letter just now come to hand from Joseph Leman. The fellow is conscience-ridden, Jack; and tells me, "That he cannot rest either day or night for the mischiefs which he fears he has been, and may still further be, the means of doing." He wishes, "if it please God, and if it please *me*, that he had never seen my honour's face."

"But the chief occasion of troubling my honour now, is not his own griefs only, *althoff* they are very great; but to prevent future mischiefs to me; for he can assure me that Colonel Morden has set out from them all, with a full resolution to have his will of me; and he is well assured, that

he said, and swore to it, as how he was resolved that he would either have my honour's heart's-blood, or I should have his; or some such-like sad threatenings: and that all the family rejoice in it, and hope I shall come short home?"

This is the substance of Joseph's letter; and I have one from Mowbray, which has a hint to the same effect. And I recollect now, that you were very importunate with me to go to Madrid, rather than to France and Italy, the last evening we passed together.

What I desire of you is, by the first despatch, to let me faithfully know all that you know on this head.

I can't bear to be threatened, Jack. Nor shall any man, unquestioned, give himself airs in my absence, if I know it, that shall make me look mean in anybody's eyes; that shall give my friends *pain* for me; that shall put them upon wishing me to change my intentions, or my plan, to avoid him. Upon such despicable terms as these think you that I could bear to live?

But why, if such were his purpose, did he not let me know it before I left England? Was he unable to work himself up to a resolution, till he knew me to be out of the kingdom?

As soon as I can inform myself where to direct to him, I will write to know his purpose; for I cannot bear suspense in such a case as this. That solemn act, were it even to be marriage or hanging, which must be done to-morrow, I had rather should be done to-day. My mind tires and sickens with impatience on ruminating upon scenes that can afford neither variety nor certainty. To dwell twenty days in expectation of an event that may be decided in a quarter of an hour, is grievous.

If he come to Paris, although I should be on my tour, he will very easily find out my *lodgings*: for I every day see some or other of my countrymen, and divers of them have I entertained *here*. I go frequently to the opera, and to the play, and appear at court, and at all public places. And on my quitting this city, will leave a direction whither my letters shall be forwarded. Were I sure that his intention is what Joseph Leman tells me it is, I would stay here, or shorten his course to me, let him be where he would.

I cannot get off my regrets on account of this dear lady. If the Colonel and I are to meet, we shall engage with the same sentiments, as to the object of our dispute, and that, you know, is no very common case.

In short, I am as much convinced that I have done wrong

as he can be; and regret it as much. But I will not bear to be threatened by any man in the world, however conscious I may be of having deserved blame.

Adieu, Belford! Be sincere with me. No palliation, as thou valuest

Thy LOVELACE.

(Belford to Lovelace.)

London, *October 26th.*

I CANNOT think, my dear Lovelace, that Colonel Morden has either threatened you in those gross terms mentioned by the vile, hypocritical, and ignorant Joseph Leman, or intends to follow you. They are the words of people of that fellow's class, and not of a gentleman: not of Colonel Morden, I am sure. You'll observe that Joseph pretends not to say that he heard him speak them.

I have been very solicitous to sound the Colonel, for your sake and for his own, and for the sake of the injunctions of the excellent lady to me, as well as to him, on that subject. He is extremely affected, and owns that he has expressed himself in terms of resentment on the occasion. Once he said to me that had his beloved cousin's own credulity or weakness contributed to her fall he could have forgiven you, but he assured me that he had not taken any resolutions; nor had he declared himself to the family in such a way as should bind him to resent; on the contrary, he has owned that his cousin's injunctions have hitherto had great force upon him.

He went abroad in a week after you. When he took his leave of me, he told me that his design was to go to Florence, that he would settle his affairs there, and then return to England, and here pass the remainder of his days.

I was apprehensive that if you and he met something unhappy might fall out; and as I knew that you proposed to take Italy, and, very likely Florence, in your return to France, I was very solicitous to prevail upon you to take the court of Spain into your plan. If you are not now to be prevailed upon to do that, let me entreat you to avoid Florence or Leghorn in your return. Let not the proposal of a meeting come from you.

It would be matter of serious reflection to me if this *fellow Joseph Leman*, who gave you such an opportunity to play your plotting purposes, should be the instrument in the devil's hand—unwittingly, too—to avenge them all upon

you ; for should you even get the better of the Colonel, would the mischief end there ? It would but add remorse to your present remorse, since the interview *must* end in death ; for he would not, I am confident, take his life at your hand. The Harlowes would prosecute you in a legal way. You hate *them* ; and *they* would be gainers by *his* death, rejoicers in *yours*. And have you not done mischief enough already ?

Let *me* hear that you are resolved to avoid this gentleman. Time will subdue all things. Nobody doubts your bravery ; nor will it be known that your plan is changed through persuasion.

Young Harlowe talks of calling you to account. This is an evidence that Mr. Morden has not taken the quarrel upon himself for their family.

I have, as you required, been very candid and sincere with you.

Let me re-urge that you know your own guilt in this affair, and should not be again an aggressor. It would be pity that so brave a man as the Colonel should drop, were you and he to meet. It would be dreadful that you should be sent to your account pursuing a fresh violence. Seest thou not ?

Adieu ! Mayst thou repent of the past ! and may no new violences add to thy heavy reflections, and overwhelm thy future hopes ! are the wishes of

Thy true friend,

JOHN BELFORD.

(Lovelace to Belford.)

Munich, *November 11th to 22nd.*

I RECEIVED yours this moment, just as I was setting out for Vienna.

As to going to Madrid, or one single step out of the way, to avoid Colonel Morden, let me perish if I do. You cannot think me so mean a wretch.

And so you own that he *has* threatened me, but not in gross and ungentlemanly terms. If he has threatened me like a gentleman, I will resent his threats like a gentleman, but he has not done as a man of honour if he has threatened me at all behind my back.

As to what you mention of my guilt, of a legal prosecution if he meet his fate from my hand, of his skill, coolness, courage, and such-like poltroon stuff, what can you mean by it ? No more of this sort of nonsense, I beseech you, in any of your future letters.

On reperusing yours in a cooler moment, I cannot but thank you for your friendly love and good intentions. My value for you from the first hour of our acquaintance till now I have never found misplaced. Thou art really an honest fellow.

Contrive to let young Harlowe know (he is a menacer too) that I shall be in England in March next.

This of Bavaria is a gallant and polite court. Nevertheless, being uncertain whether my letter may meet the Colonel at Florence, I shall quit it and set out, as I intended, for Vienna, taking care to have any letter or message from him conveyed to me there, which will soon bring me to any place to which I shall be invited. Adieu.

Wholly yours,

LOVELACE.

[Lovelace next writes to Colonel Morden to acquaint him of his great surprise on hearing of the Colonel's menacing expressions, but, in the formal mode of the day, gives him the option of meeting him on amicable terms, though he "will throw no difficulty in his way if he choose that meeting to be a hostile one." To which Colonel Morden, with some preamble, replies, that "he will attend Mr. Lovelace's appointment, were it at the farthest end of the globe," concluding thus]:—

I shall stay some days at this court, and if you please, direct to me at M. Klienfurt's, in this city (Munich). Whether here or not, your commands will reach me speedily.

Your most humble servant,

W MORDEN.

(Lovelace in reply.)

Vienna.

SIR,

I HAVE this moment the favour of yours. I will suspend a tour I was going to take into Hungary, and instantly set out for Munich, and if I find you not there, will proceed to Trent. This city being on the confines of Italy will be most convenient, as I presume, to you in your return to Tuscany, and I shall hope to meet you in it on the 14th of December.

I shall bring with me only a French valet and an English footman. Other particulars may be adjusted when I have the honour to see you. Till when I am, sir,

Your most obedient servant,

R. LOVELACE.

(Extracts—Lovelace to Belford.)

[*Enclosing the Correspondence between Colonel Morden and himself.*]

Now, Jack, I have no manner of apprehension of the event of this meeting, and I think I may say he seeks me, not I him, and so let him take the consequence.

What is infinitely nearer to my heart is my *premeditated* ingratitude to the noblest of women.

* * * *

Indeed, indeed, Belford, I am and ever shall be to my latest hour the most miserable of beings.

* * * *

And yet I go into gay and splendid company. I have made new acquaintance in the different courts I have visited. I am sought after by persons of rank and merit. I visit the colleges, churches, the palaces. I frequent the theatre, and see all that is worth seeing, am sometimes admitted to the toilette of an eminent toast, yet can think of nothing but of my Clarissa. Nor have I seen one woman with advantage to herself, but as she resembles in stature, air, complexion, voice, or in some feature, that *only* charmer of my soul.

* * * *

If I find myself thus miserable abroad, I will soon return to England, and follow your example—turn hermit, or some plaguy thing or other, and see what a constant course of penitence and mortification will do for me. There is no living at this rate.

If any mishap should befall me, you'll have the particulars of it from De la Tour. He indeed knows but little of English, but every modern tongue is yours. If anything happen, he will have some papers, which I shall send for you to transmit to Lord M. And since thou art so expert at executorships, pr'ythee, Belford, accept of the office for me, as well as for my Clarissa—Clarissa Lovelace.

Her very name, with mine joined to it, ravishes my soul, and is more delightful to me than the sweetest music.

Doubt not, Jack, that I shall give a good account of this affair. Meantime, I remain

Yours most affectionately, &c.,

LOVELACE.

(Extracts—Lovelace to Belford.)

Trent, *December 3rd.*

TO-MORROW is to be the day that will, in all probability, send either one or two ghosts to attend the manes of my CLARISSA.

I arrived here yesterday, and soon found out the Colonel's lodgings. He had been in town two days, and left his name at every probable place.

He was gone to ride out, and I left *my* name and where to be found; and in the evening he made me a visit.

He was plaguy gloomy. That was not I.

* * * *

"To recriminate now," he said, "would be as exasperating as unavailable." And as I had so cheerfully given him this opportunity, words should give place to business.—"*Your* choice, Mr. Lovelace, of time, of place, of weapon, shall be *my* choice."

"The two latter be yours, Mr. Morden. The time to-morrow, or next day, as you please."

"Next day, then, Mr. Lovelace; and we'll ride out to-morrow to fix the place."

After some discussion, the sword was the weapon agreed upon.

This day I called upon him, and we rode together to fix upon the place. De La Tour and the Colonel's valet both begged we would have a surgeon from Brixen, De La Tour having met one there, and engaged him to bleed a person at a lone cottage within sight of where we were.

The surgeon was to know nothing of the matter till his assistance was called in. We both agreed to defer the decision till to-morrow, and to leave the whole about the surgeon. to the management of our two valets, enjoining them secrecy, and so rode back by different ways.

We fixed upon a little lone valley for the spot; ten to-morrow morning the time; and single rapier the word. Yet I repeatedly told him that I value myself so much upon my skill in that weapon that I would wish him to choose any other.

He said it was a gentleman's weapon: that, as to him, one weapon was as good as another.

We are to ride thither: his footman and mine to wait at a distance, with a chaise to carry off to the borders of the Venetian territories the survivor, if one drop, or to assist, as occasion may demand.

And thus, Belford, is the matter settled.
 A shower of rain has left me nothing else to do; and, therefore, I write this letter, though I might as well have deferred it till to-morrow twelve o'clock, when I doubt not to be able to write again, to assure you how much I am

Yours, &c.,

LOVELACE.

[*Translation of a Letter from F. J. De la Tour.*]

(To John Belford, Esq., near Soho Square, London.)

Trent, *December 18th*, N.S.

SIR,

I HAVE melancholy news to inform you of by order of the Chevalier Lovelace.

I had taken care to have ready, within a little distance, a surgeon and his assistant, to whom I had revealed the matter. A post-chaise was ready, with each of their footmen, at a distance.

The two chevaliers were attended by Monsieur Margate (the Colonel's gentleman) and myself.

After a few compliments, both the gentlemen, with the greatest presence of mind I ever beheld, stripped to their shirts and drew.

They parried with equal judgment several passes. My chevalier drew the first blood, making a desperate push, which, by a sudden turn of his antagonist, missed going clear through him, and wounded him in his right side. But before my chevalier could recover himself, the Colonel, in return, pushed him in the left arm, near the shoulder, and this being followed by a great effusion of blood, the Colonel said, "Sir, I believe you have enough."

My chevalier swore by G—d he was not hurt, and made another pass at his antagonist, which he, with a surprising dexterity, received under his arm, and run my dear Chevalier into the body, who immediately fell, saying, "The luck is yours, sir,—O my beloved Clarissa! Now art thou——" His sword dropped from his hand. Mr. Morden threw his down, and ran to him, saying in French, "Ah! Monsieur, you are a dead man. Call to God for mercy!"

We gave the signal agreed upon to the footmen, and they and the surgeons instantly came up.

Colonel Morden was as cool as if nothing so extraordinary had happened, assisting the surgeons, though his own wound

bled much. But my dear chevalier fainted away two or three times.

We helped him into the voiture, and then the Colonel suffered his own wound to be dressed, and appeared concerned that my chevalier was (when he could speak) extremely outrageous. Poor gentleman! he had made quite sure of victory!

The Colonel, against the surgeons' advice, would mount on horseback to pass into the Venetian territories, and generously gave me a purse of gold to pay them, desiring me to make a present to the footman, and to accept of the remainder as a mark of his satisfaction in my conduct, and in my care and tenderness of my master.

The surgeons told him that my chevalier could not live over the day.

When the Colonel took leave of him, Mr. Lovelace said, "You have well revenged the dear creature."

"Sir," said the Colonel, with the piety of a confessor (wringing Mr. Lovelace's hand), "snatch these few fleeting moments, and commend yourself to God."

And so he rode off.

We brought my chevalier alive to the nearest cottage, and he gave orders to me to dispatch to you the packet I herewith send sealed up; and bid me write to you the particulars of this most unhappy affair, and give you thanks, in his name, for all your favours and friendship to him.

He lived over the night, but suffered much. He seemed very unwilling to die.

He was delirious the two last hours, and several times cried out, as if he had seen some frightful spectre. "Take her away! take her away!" And sometimes praised some lady (that Clarissa, I suppose, whom he had invoked when he received his death-wound), calling her divine creature! fair sufferer! And once he said, "Look down, blessed spirit, look down!"

His few last words I must not omit, as they show composure which may administer some consolation to his honourable friends.

"*Blessed*," said he, addressing himself no doubt to Heaven, for his dying eyes were lifted up; and with great fervour (lifting up his eyes and hands) again pronounced the word *Blessed*. At the last he distinctly uttered these three words,

LET THIS EXPIATE!

Then, his head sinking on his pillow, he expired, at half an hour after ten.

He little thought, poor gentleman, his end so near; so he had given no direction about his body. I have caused it to be deposited in a vault, till I have orders from England.

This is a favour that was procured with difficulty, and would have been refused had he not been an Englishman of rank, for he had refused ghostly attendance, and the sacraments in the Catholic way. May his soul be happy, I pray God!

Of my dear chevalier's effects, I will give you a faithful account in my next. And so, waiting at this place your commands, I am, sir,

Your most faithful and obedient servant,

F. J. DE LA TOUR.

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